

**PROJECT TO DEVELOP A  
MECHANISM TO  
MEASURE CUSTOMER  
SATISFACTION WITH PRODUCTS AND  
SERVICES OF THE DEPARTMENT**

**FINAL REPORT  
Submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation**



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16. Abstract This report presents the results of a three phase project to develop a mechanism to measure the level of general public satisfaction with the products and services of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. The three phases were as follows: Phase 1, an analysis of existing customer satisfaction measures, found that there are few proactive, statistical measures of satisfaction and that measures could not be compared across divisions or over time. Based on Phase 1 research, three customer segments (DMV customers, State Patrol customers, and Transportation District customers) were recommended. The department identified two questions to be answered by the mechanism – “are we doing things right” and “are we doing the right things”. Phase 2 consisted of a search for best practices nationwide. Best practices are presented in detail in the report, and were incorporated into the development of the mechanism and into the plan for integrating the information into decision making. No examples of direct, quantitative approaches to measuring customer priorities (i.e. are we doing the right things) were identified. Phase 3 consisted of the development of a customer satisfaction mechanism and an analysis framework to compliment and expand WisDOT's existing efforts. A telephone survey was selected as the best fit method for department goals. From extensive focus groups, a survey was developed to measure satisfaction with attributes important to customers. The survey was then pilot tested, and is presented in the report along with an analysis framework.					
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**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
DEPARTMENT-WIDE CUSTOMER  
SATISFACTION MECHANISM**

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## ***PROJECT OVERVIEW, PURPOSE AND SCOPE***

In December 2001, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) selected Virchow, Krause & Company, LLP and its subcontractor, Chamberlain Research Consultants, Inc., to develop a mechanism to measure the **general public's** satisfaction with WisDOT's products and services.

WisDOT provides a wide variety of services and programs, ranging from issuing driver licenses to rehabilitating state highways. In delivering this broad range of services, WisDOT faces fiscal constraints, competing objectives, and the constant tradeoffs inherent to public sector management. To navigate these challenges, the Department recognizes the importance of understanding customer satisfaction levels with various services. While some customer and stakeholder groups have feedback mechanisms in place, **there is no formal mechanism to measure general public customer satisfaction.** Accordingly, the Department's executive management approved this project to develop a department-wide system for measuring general public customer satisfaction, along with the mechanism for collecting, analyzing and reporting on this measure.

## ***ANALYSIS OF CURRENT MECHANISMS***

This study included three phases: an analysis of existing WisDOT customer satisfaction measures, identification of best practices nationwide in customer satisfaction, and finally, the development of a set of customer satisfaction measures and data-collection mechanisms, along with the identification of an analysis framework.

The project was initiated with a focus group with the Board of Directors, conducted by Sharon Chamberlain of Chamberlain Research, to further refine the scope of the mechanism to be developed. Results of this group are included in the report, and reflect two goals. The Board is interested in obtaining information about whether the Department is doing things right, as well as attempting to gather information about whether customers feel the Department is doing the right things (customer priorities).

After refining the scope of the mechanism, we reviewed existing customer satisfaction measures in place in the Department. This review identified several gaps, which are documented in detail in this report. **We found that existing customer satisfaction measures tend toward ad hoc or qualitative research with few proactive, statistically sound measures of customer satisfaction, resulting in a lack of consistent quantitative data that can be compared across divisions.**

We turned to other states to identify whether a model for measuring priorities across diverse divisions existed. Our research of best practices in other states found some best practices for obtaining customer feedback and incorporating that feedback into decision making. While we found it was common for state transportation agencies to measure service quality, we did not find any instances of measuring customer priorities across divisions.

## **RECOMMENDED FRAMEWORK**

Based on Phase 1 and 2 analysis, the inventory of current measures in place, and best practices identified, we provided a recommended framework for the mechanism. The framework includes a model for segmenting customers and a plan for integrating the mechanism into department-wide decision making.

Three customer segments are recommended based on an alignment of customers with **direct** products and services. **These recommended customer segments are: DMV customers (motor vehicle registrants and licensed drivers), state patrol customers (traffic enforcement and motorists in need), and transportation district customers (the traveling public and property owners affected by highway projects).**

**To integrate the mechanism into department-wide decision making moving forward, the following recommendations are provided:**

- The timeline for data collection and analysis of the mechanism should be integrated with timing of the strategic plan
- The customer satisfaction mechanism should be timed in a manner to allow integration with the budget process.
- Ideally, the mechanism should be linked to other department-wide measures and strategic priorities such as efficiency, safety, partnership, and a quality workforce.
- The department should strive to develop cascading measures at the operational and tactical levels to assist in customer satisfaction management.
- The Department should establish a reporting framework that reinforces linkages to strategic decisions and accountability systems.
- Accountability systems should establish linkages to divisions without significant interaction with the general public.
- The Department should establish a strategic performance measure based upon this mechanism
- Division quarterly business plans should track improvements and document actions taken to affect overall satisfaction.
- The mechanism should be conducted and results reported at least biennially (preferable annually).
- The Department should establish a communication plan to report the results of the mechanism.

**In addition, we wish to emphasize that while this tool will provide the department with a measure of general public customer satisfaction that can be compared across divisions, there are limitations of this mechanism. Three crucial limitations are outlined below.**

First, the mechanism can only measure what customers see. The mechanism must focus on products and services delivered to the general public, and a large portion of WisDOT's services will be outside the scope, as they are not directly delivered to the general public. The mechanism can measure *what* the public experience is, WisDOT will be responsible to determine *how* customer expectations can be met.

Second, the general public customer satisfaction is only one element in a large and complicated framework that guides the department's decisions. The mechanism must be interpreted alongside other measures and technical information, as one component to aid in decision making. The overall rating of customer satisfaction will serve as a red flag, to alert the Department to potential changes over time, but will not answer all questions about how (and to what extent) customer satisfaction can or should be enhanced.

Finally, the Department should clearly define how customer satisfaction information will be used within the context of what customers can reasonably provide. For example, it may not be possible for customers to evaluate the priority they place on DMV as opposed to highways, or to evaluate the relative priority of broad principles such as safety and mobility.

### ***DEVELOPING THE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION MECHANISM***

The first step in creating a customer satisfaction measure is identifying the factors or components of customer satisfaction. To identify these factors for DOT, Chamberlain Research Consultants (CRC) conducted focus groups with DOT customers who have had contact with each of the three customer segments identified in Phase 2: DMV customers, state patrol customers, and transportation district customers. Using the information collected in the focus groups, CRC developed a quantitative tool for measuring customer satisfaction across the customer-focused divisions of DOT. **Thus, the resulting mechanism was created based on criteria identified by actual DOT customers (the survey is included in the report appendix).**

To this end, a single customer satisfaction survey was developed to collect customer satisfaction data. **The advantage of using one instrument is that it offers a consistent way of collecting and analyzing data across the department.** First, all customers answer general questions about DOT divisions and then are routed to one section of the questionnaire to answer questions about a specific encounter with one of the following transaction types:

- Contact with DMV in person
- Contact with DMV by phone, mail, or on-line
- Encountering state highway construction or maintenance while driving
- Receiving motorist assistance by the State Patrol
- Being stopped by the State Patrol for a traffic violation
- Owning property or residing in a community affected by state highway construction

For each customer segment, participants first rate how important the relevant factors of satisfaction are to them and then rate their satisfaction with each factor during a recent encounter. Each participant then rates their overall satisfaction with the division and the department.

### ***TESTING THE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION MECHANISM***

CRC conducted a telephone survey with 300 randomly selected Wisconsin residents to pilot test the customer satisfaction mechanism. This research used a random digit dial (RDD) list, because targeted lists with names and phone numbers were not available from DOT and because an RDD sample allowed CRC to gauge the incidence of each transaction type. In fact, it was found that people who received motorist assistance and property owners of land affected by state highway construction had a very low incidence in the population.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONDUCTING A LARGE-SCALE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION STUDY**

**The customer satisfaction survey performed extremely well in the pilot test and is recommended for use in a large-scale on-going customer satisfaction initiative.** However, although recruiting participants from an RDD list was sufficient for the pilot study, it is not the most efficient way to recruit participants for a large on-going customer satisfaction study and would be the most expensive way to collect these data. Thus, we suggest a different sampling strategy and sample size for the large on-going study. The following are our recommendations for conducting this research:

- To collect the most unbiased, accurate data possible, telephone interviews should be used to conduct a large, on-going study
- To make data collection as timely, efficient, and inexpensive as possible, each of the divisions identified through customer segmentation should provide targeted lists of customers with names and phone numbers
  - If targeted customer lists of people who have received motorist assistance from the State Patrol are not available, we do not feel that the benefit outweighs the cost of data collection and recommend dropping this section from the survey
- To achieve a desirable margin of error ( $\pm 5\%$ ), 380 people from each transaction type must complete the survey (this equates to 2,280 respondents assuming that DOT can provide targeted lists for each segment)
- Ideally, results from the research will be reported on a quarterly basis; reporting on a quarterly basis will allow comparisons among seasons using a statistically reliable sample (this equates to 2,280 surveys conducted per quarter or 9,120 annually)
  - To accommodate a smaller budget, results could be compiled twice per year (4,560 surveys annually) or once per year (2,280 surveys annually). Although these options will still provide useful information, comparisons between seasons will be limited because of a larger margin of error
- Regardless of the frequency of data reporting, data should be collected on a monthly basis to avoid seasonal biases
- Annual reporting should be scheduled to allow enough time for DOT to use the information while preparing for its biennial budget submittal which occurs in September
- Questions answered by all respondents that assess overall satisfaction with each department (questions G1-G4 on the survey) should be added to all DOT customer satisfaction surveys to gauge the overall impression of these departments; results from these questions will be used as a broad barometer of satisfaction that indicates the need for further questions rather than as a call for specific action
- The highway maintenance and traffic operations survey is a proactive, statistical survey currently conducted by the Bureau of Highway Operations. It is therefore recommended that the overarching satisfaction questions (G1-G4) be added to that survey, and the data from those questions analyzed along with the results of the larger Customer Satisfaction survey. Through this process, the department can ensure that it capitalizes on research already being done. Prior to integrating the data, however, consideration should be given to ensuring that sample size, timing of the surveys, and frequency of data collection are comparable.



### ***ANALYZING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION DATA***

The survey was designed to provide strategic decision making information to the department that is not currently available, such as:

- How satisfied are general public customers with the service they receive from various divisions and how does this change over time (are we doing things right?)
- What aspects of service are important to customers and how satisfied are customers with the aspects they consider most important (are we doing things right?, are we doing the right things?)
- What is the overall level of customer satisfaction with the department, and which services have the greatest influence on overall satisfaction (are we doing things right? Are we doing the right things?)

There are three common strategies used for analyzing customer satisfaction data to develop answers to the type of questions posed above: gap analysis, regression analysis, and factor analysis. Each analysis can be used, depending on the goals of the division. The following are options for analyzing data:

- **Gap analysis**, as displayed on the graph below, indicates where satisfaction lags behind importance and where satisfaction exceeds the importance on each attribute:

- **Regression analysis** is used to identify drivers of satisfaction. For example, if the transportation district has a limited budget and can only focus on one or two components instead of the 13 listed in the survey, regression analysis can identify the most important ones. This technique can be used to understand the relationship between one attribute or service and overall satisfaction. For example, the graph below depicts the relationship that all satisfaction attributes have in regards to overall satisfaction:
- **Factor analysis** can be used to identify underlying components of satisfaction, or categorize data into manageable information units. For example, components of satisfaction, such as respect, friendly, and being courteous may be reduced to a common underlying factor called customer care:

### ***ESTIMATED FIRST YEAR COSTS***

If DOT hires a vendor to collect and analyze the data as recommended, the cost to complete 2,280 surveys (380 per transaction type) using targeted lists provided by DOT is estimated at approximately \$65,000 to \$75,000. If results are reported quarterly, as recommended, the annual cost is estimated at between \$260,000 and \$300,000.

If targeted lists from DOT are not available, the cost to complete 1,900 surveys (eliminating the motorist assistance section from the survey) using an RDD list may be approximately between \$160,000 and \$170,000 per reporting period. This translates to approximately \$640,000 to \$680,000 per year, with analyses conducted on a quarterly basis.

The cost of the survey will depend on a number of factors, including availability of targeted lists, sample size, and frequency of data collection. Accordingly, it is anticipated that the Department's selected vendor should be able to work with DOT to create a solution that can meet its goals while accommodating the Department's budget.

In December 2001, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) selected Virchow, Krause & Company, LLP and its subcontractor, Chamberlain Research Consultants, Inc., to develop a mechanism to measure the general public's satisfaction with WisDOT's products and services.

#### **PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation provides a wide variety of services and programs, ranging from issuing driver licenses to rehabilitating state highways. In delivering this broad range of services, WisDOT faces fiscal constraints and constant tradeoffs inherent to public sector management. To navigate these challenges, the Department recognizes the importance of understanding customer satisfaction levels with services. Accordingly, the Department's executive management approved a project to develop a department-wide system for measuring general public customer satisfaction<sup>1</sup>, along with the mechanism for collecting, analyzing and reporting on this measure. Overall, the goals of this project are to:

- 1) Identify and segment the customer groups that make up the general public.
- 2) Compile an inventory of existing measures of customer satisfaction.
- 3) Develop specific measures of performance in the area of customer satisfaction to facilitate in the long-term a better understanding of customer satisfaction trends and to provide decision-makers with a consistent source of reliable customer information.
- 4) Develop a plan for integrating customer satisfaction data into department-wide decision making and performance measurement.

To accomplish the above, WisDOT designed the project to include three phases:

- 1) Phase 1: An analysis of existing WisDOT customer satisfaction measures, on-going data-collection mechanisms, analytical methods, and high-level decision making processes.
- 2) Phase 2: Identification of best practices nationwide relating to: the identification, implementation, and integration of effective and efficient customer satisfaction measures, customer segmentation strategies, data-collection mechanisms, and analytical methods.
- 3) Phase 3: Development of a set of customer satisfaction measures and data-collection mechanisms, along with the identification of an analysis framework, that would complement or expand the effectiveness of WisDOT's existing efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the scope identified at the project onset, all references to customer satisfaction within the report (unless otherwise noted) refer to *general public* satisfaction.

## **APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY**

To accomplish the project's purpose and scope for Phase 1, Virchow, Krause & Company, LLP and Chamberlain Research Consultants (CRC):

- Reviewed pertinent background materials, including organization charts, strategic and tactical plans, and results of related studies/initiatives.
- Conducted a focus group with representatives of the Department's Board of Directors to define customer satisfaction and customer groups.
- Surveyed department staff to compile an inventory of existing customer satisfaction measures, including quantitative, qualitative, and reactive measures.
- Interviewed division managers and/or teams to define products and services, general public customer groups served, and examine current measures and decision making practices.
- Analyzed data and compiled report.

To accomplish the scope identified in Phase 2, Virchow, Krause & Company, LLP conducted the following:

- Reviewed literature to identify agencies with customer satisfaction mechanisms, to identify potential best practices, and to gauge the extent to which state transportation agencies have experienced success in implementing customer satisfaction mechanisms.
- Researched state transportation Web sites to identify those with customer satisfaction mechanisms in place and identify best practice partners.
- Identified best practice partners and gained approval from WisDOT of a partner list.
- Gathered information from partners, including: practices regarding customer segmentation/identification, data collection mechanisms, customer performance measures, and use of customer data in management decision making.
- Analyzed data from the literature and best practice partners and compiled this report.

To accomplish the scope identified in Phase 3, Chamberlain Research Consultants, Inc. conducted the following:

- Conducted four focus groups with state residents to assess their criteria for satisfaction with the Department of Transportation.
- Designed a customer satisfaction survey using data from the focus groups and results of Phase 1 and 2 research.
- Pilot tested the survey with a sample of 300 residents, using a random digit dial phone survey.
- Analyzed the results of the pilot test.
- Developed recommendations for data collection.
- Designed an analysis framework for the ongoing customer satisfaction survey.

## ***REPORT FORMAT***

Virchow, Krause & Company, LLP and Chamberlain Research Consultants, Inc. are pleased to present WisDOT with the results of our research. The report format is intended to assist WisDOT in addressing the issues relative to each area. Before presenting our findings and recommendations, we wish to thank all those who participated for their cooperation, time and involvement. We received the highest level of cooperation from all those contacted regarding this review.

The profile of current practices, by its nature, focuses on gaps in information. The comments and suggestions provided are not intended to reflect in any way on the integrity or ability of WisDOT personnel. Rather, they are made solely in the interest of improving customer satisfaction information and the integration of that information into decision making.

This report is divided into several sections – the first section presents the results of the focus group conducted by Sharon Chamberlain of Chamberlain Research Consultants, Inc. with the Board of Directors to identify broad customer categories, define customer satisfaction, and determine how the Board seeks to use data generated from the final mechanism. Next, the results of Phase 1 are presented, including a profile of current customer satisfaction information and plan for integrating a customer satisfaction mechanism into department-wide decision making (adaptations of best practices from Phase 2 are included with Phase 1 recommendations). Phase 1 results are followed by the results of Phase 2, including best practices on data collection, customer segmentation, and customer performance measurement and recommendations for adapting these best practices for use by WisDOT. Appendix 1A presents the inventory of customer satisfaction measures. Appendix 1B presents detailed data by division/bureau (although some of the findings were outside the scope, they came to our attention during fact-finding and were included in the hope that they will be useful to the Department.

The next section of the report presents Phase 3 results, beginning with the customer satisfaction measures, data collection instruments, and the analysis framework. The customer satisfaction pilot report is then presented, followed by Appendix 2A, the customer satisfaction survey instrument and Appendix 2B, the focus group detailed findings.

On March 6, 2002, Sharon Chamberlain, President of Chamberlain Research Consultants, Inc., facilitated a focus group with members of the WisDOT Board of Directors. Because the Board of Directors has been identified as the primary user of the customer satisfaction mechanism that is the focus of this project, the two-hour focus session was designed to accomplish three objectives:

- a) Identify broad customer categories that are served by WisDOT.
- b) Define customer satisfaction for purposes of the project.
- c) Outline the decisions the Board seeks to make with the data generated by the mechanism.

During the session, several themes emerged:

- **The Department serves a wide range of customers.** Customers can be identified in many ways, including by product line or method of contact. In further segmenting customers and analyzing results, key sub-segments will include geographic region and demographic factors, including age and ethnicity.
- **For purposes of this project, customer satisfaction includes both service quality (i.e. are we doing things right) and service priorities (i.e. are we doing the right things).** Focus group participants indicated that they are looking for data about satisfaction with service quality attributes such as timeliness and courtesy, as well as data about customer values/priorities.
- **The decisions for which the mechanism can assist range from resource allocation to identifying efficiencies, improvements, and standards.** Two themes emerged when discussing the types of decisions the Board would like to make with the data from the mechanism. First, the group identified ways in which the data can assist with decisions about resource allocation and budget priorities. Second, the participants were looking for data to compare agency performance to public expectations, which could lead to development of standards and targets for improvement.

Based on the results of the focus group, and because no one mechanism can provide answers to all customer satisfaction needs at a level that provides meaningful detail, the scope of this mechanism was refined from the general public customer focus established at the onset. Specifically,

- The final mechanism will only measure those services or products that directly intersect with the general public. Given that the mechanism will include service quality and given its focus on the general public, the scope is necessarily limited to those services that are provided directly to the general public.
- The focus of the mechanism will be those services and products with a high volume of product or customer interaction.
- To the extent feasible, the mechanism will examine both aspects of customer satisfaction – i.e. “are we doing things right” and “are we doing the right things.”
- Within that context, the mechanism will examine common, shared attributes of customer satisfaction.

- The mechanism should ask customers the “what” (the outcome or goal); it is the Department’s responsibility to figure out the “how” (the detail of how the goal is to be accomplished).

**Following is a detailed list of questions asked of the focus group, along with attendee responses:**

**I. What is your interest in the project?**

- Presently most efforts to measure effectiveness are negative versus positive.
- Looking for priorities in setting budgets.
- How we can benchmark against other states.
- Leverage survey activities with our departments.
- Looking for real numbers to hang our hat on—trends.
- Looking for what will precipitate the next phone call.
- Presently there is no consistent way to measure customer satisfaction.
- Looking to put out products with clarity and offering public involvement so that customers know they are listened to.
- Would like to see us personalize our view, increase response time, and integrate with other departments.

**How do you define customer satisfaction?**

- We do not have an agreed upon, articulate definition.
- It may be that customers are served in 15 minutes or less.
- Depending on the medium, it may be more appropriate to respond within two hours, e.g. Internet.
- We need to understand the differences among different customers.
- Treating customers courteously, one-on-one, special.
- Never want customers unsatisfied to the point that it becomes political.
- Customers don’t think they are our customers.
- Customers want reliable, predictable times.
- Every 2 years DOT goes to the Legislature and they need information that says “X” is more important than “Y”.

**II. What do you see as the broad categories of customers within the General Public?**

**What is the best way to segment customers?**

- Models of segmentation we should be working to confirm.
- Geographic regions (plus urban/rural).
- Standardize to compare over time.
- Different services are offered in urban/rural and urban North and urban South can be different as well.
- By product lines/cycle.
- By method of contact.
- By age.
- Consider the fact that there are 14 language categories, and then reduce for cross-tab purposes to Caucasian, African/American, Asian (Hmong) and Hispanic.
- Geographic—Age—Ethnicity.

**III. What data are you not getting now that would be helpful to have?**

- Would like to know how customers feel, e.g. about construction, about congestion, travel time satisfaction, seatbelt laws, etc.
- Would like a picture of value across product lines.
- Expectations customers have regarding spending.
- What do customers want (more lanes, more markings, more visible signs).
- How important one feature/product is over another.
- Value of services.



**What sorts of decisions are you hoping to make with this data?**

- Looking at deficiencies to decide on resource needs.
- Understand outcome to figure out product mix; efficiencies, improvements, standards.
- Information will go to policymakers.
- Will affect how we structure the biennial budget.
- What does the public care about or notice.
- Want to make a more informed argument to Legislature to help make good, informed decisions.
- How to deploy DOT resources most effectively knowing the public's value.

**Are you looking more for doing the right things, or doing things right?**

- How to deliver the priorities of the customers. Perhaps a conjoint study.
- Creating a good system measuring day to day, and setting spending priorities.
- Looking at the agency performance versus what the public values.
- Understanding what customers expect (e.g. with State Patrol should a customer be pulled over at 60 mph in a 55 mph zone, what should the response time be with crashes, do they want to know what areas are being patrolled.)
- Customer expectations for what DOT services should and should not encompass.

**What kind of data collection methods/pieces would help you get better/helpful information in a cost-effective way. Data you would like to be able to collect yourself versus through an outside vendor.**

- Expensive, yet good data, are surveys conducted with phone follow up.
- Post cards get a pretty good response.
- Include with driver's license renewal.
- Question remains if research is credible if done by DOT versus vendor.
- Who are we doing it for? DOT? General Public? Legislature?
- Outside vendor could administer it, but DOT could do the analysis/tabulation.
- Construct methodology and survey design with vendor.

**What are your thoughts on the frequency for various customer categories?**

- Compare over time with comparisons among departments.

**IV. For each customer category (above) what are the attributes you want to measure?**

- How will you use the information collected for each category?
- Are there ways in which the information can be collated, distributed, interpreted to make your decision making easier?
- Use similar scales for day to day performances.
- Prioritization for each department.

**Are there decisions about functions to stop doing, especially in difficult financial times?**

- We will still do a lot of what we do today. What we don't have is the big picture across departments.
- Suggestion to consider Web site as part of a combination of methods.

**V. What are the most important pieces of information about customer satisfaction and customer priorities that you need to have?**

- We still have regulatory responsibility that we must impose.
- How do customers tolerate some of the big issues related to public rights?

**If you couldn't have everything, what would you give up?**

- What we already know at different division levels that have reliable data, and is collected systematically; looking at existing internal process is important.
- (Look at the Internet, which is being redone, to understand its construction for potential data collection.)
- Do not give up what the public values.

**VI. Anything else we should be looking at/doing to make this project a success?**

- Develop same scales and measurement to match.
- Must be able to run the mechanism internally.
- Must create discipline internally.

**How committed are you to using these data—What would increase your commitment?**

- This is a high priority, and defined as necessary research.
- We must use data in political arena.
- Not all agree on ongoing research project.
- Results may generate additional dollars.
- All must commit (debate if Divisions have to come up with money from their own budgets).
- Research funds may need to be reallocated.

**What do you want to be certain to get from the final mechanism?**

- Margin of error.
- Reliability in relation to the impact on other complex issues/tradeoffs.
- Look at what drives it versus something simplistic (regression).
- Department-wide measure of customer satisfaction.
- Discussion of 10-point scale.
- If developing an index, how should components be weighed?
- To have useful reasonable product that we can get around.
- Main products of each division (delivered by Board members) evaluated for customer satisfaction.
- Then the divisions can each do their own research based on the general public results.

## ***PROFILE OF CURRENT SYSTEMS IN PLACE***

### **Overview of the Department**

Established in 1967 by the Kellet Reorganization Act, WisDOT is responsible for providing a broad range of services related to Wisconsin's transportation infrastructure. Specifically, services provided by the department range from issuance of driver's licenses and vehicle registration to enforcement of traffic and criminal laws to maintaining the state's highways and overseeing rail and harbors. The range of services is broader than that found in many other DOTs, with a variety of DOTs configured more around functional areas, i.e. public safety, licensing. This significantly complicates the creation of a department-wide satisfaction mechanism.

In order to deliver these services, the Department is organized into the Executive Division, including the Secretary, and six divisions organized by transportation functions. The divisions are as follows (as summarized by the Department):

- **Executive Division:** oversees department operations, policies and positions on issues related to all divisions and the state's transportation infrastructure.
- **Motor Vehicles Division:** registers vehicles, licenses drivers, administers motor vehicle laws, licenses motor vehicle dealerships, and administers a vehicle emissions testing program.
- **State Patrol Division:** enforces all traffic and criminal laws; helps motorists in needs, inspects trucks, school buses and ambulances, and helps local law enforcement agencies with natural disasters or civil disturbances.
- **Transportation Districts Division:** serves as the community contact, presents regional transportation needs; and plans, designs, builds, and maintains the state trunk highway system.
- **Transportation Infrastructure Development Division:** ensures the development and safe operation of Wisconsin's airports, harbors, highways and railroads; develops and implements effective processes, policies, and standards; provides specialized expertise; and performs centralized production activities.
- **Transportation Investment Management Division:** conducts long-range, multimodal transportation planning, guides the use of state and federal transportation dollars based upon research, and conducts data analysis of the state's transportation systems.
- **Business Management:** manages WisDOT's day-to-day business in the areas of personnel, accounting, auditing, financial systems, payroll, graphic design and video services, printing, data processing, systems analysis, facilities, fleet, purchasing, and risk and safety programs.

The focus of this study is general public customer satisfaction, and it is important to note that because of the diverse nature of the services provided, WisDOT divisions have varying levels of contact with the general public. For example, some divisions such as Transportation Investment Management (DTIM) and Transportation Infrastructure Development (DTID) are focused heavily on planning, resource management or standards development. While the general public is the customer for the end outcome of these divisions, few members of the general public would interact directly with DTIM or DTID.

In addition to varying levels of general public customer contact, divisions often face competing objectives and policies. WisDOT services are complex, multi-faceted, and often involve a regulatory and compliance component. Customer satisfaction is not the sole consideration for decision making. Not only do other factors such as cost have to be considered, but there also may be cases where customer stated preferences run counter to the Department's regulatory role. For example, although, when asked, the public might indicate that the smallest possible wait time is desirable when applying for a driver's license, most would recognize that wait time must be counterbalanced with the Department's responsibility for ensuring that licenses are only issued to those who have completed the necessary testing. These complexities, as well as the need to balance customer satisfaction with technical knowledge, must be considered in analyzing the role of customer satisfaction information in decision making.

### **Customer Groups/Segmentation**

Before analyzing the current customer satisfaction measures in place within the Department, it is necessary to identify the general public customer groups that receive WisDOT products and services. The purpose of this step is to determine the scope of the mechanism, assist in developing methodologies to target the mechanism, and ensure that the mechanism is structured in a way to facilitate decision making. There are a number of models that can be used to group the customers served by WisDOT. In evaluating which model will be most appropriate for the department-wide customer satisfaction mechanism, we applied several criteria:

- **Link to decisions** – the customer groupings must be structured in a way that provides useful information to decision makers.
- **Consistency with strategic intent of the mechanism** – not only should the groups align with decisions, but the decisions they prompt should be strategic in nature. For example, some organizations segment customers by type of contact with the department (in person v. phone v. mail customers). While this is important tactical or operational information for WisDOT, most data on satisfaction by method of contact is not useful unless product line information accompanies it, and is not consistent with the strategic intent.
- **Focus of mechanism** – given that the mechanism will measure both “are we doing things right” and “are we doing the right things”, the focus will be on direct, general public customers. Accordingly, the customer groupings should yield direct, general public customers.

The customer groups served by WisDOT can be identified in a number of different ways:

#### **Model 1: WisDOT Lines of Business Model**

One model used by the department identifies three segments of business lines, which cut across the products and services of the Department. These lines of business are:

- Project Development
- Enforcement/Regulation
- Customer Services

While this model does describe the services of the Department, it does not yield unique segments. For example, when interacting with DMV to renew a driver's license, one can be receiving a customer service or can be subject to the Division's enforcement role, depending on the circumstances.

### **Model 2: Contact Purpose Model**

A second model that can be used to describe the products and customer of the Department is by aligning the line of business with the purpose of the product or service:

- Services designed to make travelways better and/or safer (includes highway, rail, harbor, and other transportation maintenance and operations, modal planning and related services).
- Services designed to make travelers better and/or safer (includes State Patrol enforcement of traffic regulations, transportation safety planning, and DMV products and services).

This model succinctly summarizes the primary end results to be achieved by DOT products and services. However, each category includes a large number of subcategories of products and services, which would make the model difficult to implement in actual customer surveys or other feedback mechanisms. In addition, these categories include all services within the Department, and is not limited to just those with direct, general public interaction.

### **Model 3: Alignment of Customers with Products and Services**

A third model for segmenting customers identifies the primary products and services within various divisions and bureaus of the Department. Next, those products and services that have significant volume of *direct* general public customers are identified. Finally, general public customers are aligned with the products and services they receive. From this model three customer groups emerge:

- DMV customers
  - Motor vehicle registrants (including title and registration services)
  - Licensed drivers (including all driver related products)
- State Patrol customers (all traveling public)
  - Motorists in need
  - Traffic enforcement
- Transportation District customers (all modes)
  - Traveling public
  - Citizens and businesses affected by transportation projects

An additional customer group, information seekers/individuals who interact online, exists. This group can be envisioned as a sub-segment of the groups identified above.

The benefits of this model are that it identifies only those products and services with direct general public impact. Because customer groups are aligned with the products and services, they can easily be targeted and grouped for purposes of obtaining customer feedback.

Different models of customer grouping are appropriate in different circumstances. For purposes of this mechanism, Virchow Krause and Chamberlain Research Consultants selected Model 3 for the following reason: it ensures that customer groupings will yield information in a way that is useful for decision making, it is consistent with the strategic intent of the mechanism, and it maintains focus on services and products for which satisfaction can be evaluated based on service quality and customer priorities.

It is important to recognize that these groupings represent only the first stage of customer segmentation. For data analysis purposes, it is critical that customer sub-segments be identified, delineated, and researched. This means building customer profile questions into the mechanism to allow for further segmentation. These parameters for sub-segments should include:

- Geography
- Demographic characteristics such as age and ethnicity

- Method of contact
- Consider including in-state vs. out-of-state

These sub-segments, coupled with the overall customer grouping model, should assist the Department in identifying unique needs and requirements for customer groups. Data from the mechanism can be used within this framework to identify and target gaps and improvement requirements.

### Existing Measures – Data Collection and Decision Making

The identification of customer groups is the first step to developing the framework for the final mechanism. However, before the remaining framework could be outlined, it was crucial to gain an understanding of what the Department has in place currently to measure customer satisfaction at the Department and Division level.

WisDOT completes strategic plans on a two-year cycle. An environmental scan process and formal planning event occurs every two years, which lead to the development of emphasis areas. The Department's current strategic plan identifies the following emphasis areas:

- Maintain a quality workforce
- Increase efficiency
- Promote transportation safety
- Foster a comprehensive view of transportation
- Strengthen partnerships
- Anticipate and meet our customers' needs

For each emphasis area, the Department has developed primary measures. For the emphasis area "anticipate and meet our customers' needs", the department currently uses an index composed of various measures from Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV), State Patrol, and the Division of Transportation Infrastructure Development (DTID). Following is a summary of the data that comprise this measure:

Division	Measure	Measure Text	Current Target	00 Results
DMV	Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI)	Roll up of 7 measures of customer satisfaction with product delivery	10	7.1
DSP	Complaint Total Compliment Total % Compliments of all comments	Done through customer feedback	100%	62 341 84.62%
DTID	Highway Road Maintenance Operations	Public perception Survey of DOT's performance of road maintenance (1-10 scale) comprised of 17 services provided	10	NA (99 result – 7.38)
DTID	International Roughness Index	Measurement of ride quality or pavement smoothness % of road miles surveyed that met the Federal standard of "good" (2.24)	2.24  100%	1.74  77.6%
DTID	Highway Operations Quality Index	Quality of highway maintenance and traffic operations as perceived by the traveling public	10	NA (99 result – 7.00)

This measure does not allow customer satisfaction to be compared across divisions in a quantitative manner, nor do all components of the index measure the same aspect of satisfaction. Thus, WisDOT lacks a department-wide measure that can be compared across products or services.

To begin our analysis of existing measures in place at the division level, we sent an inventory survey to over forty staff from across all divisions. We then compared the results of this inventory with the customer survey team database (the database includes a list of surveys compiled by the customer survey team). Finally, we conducted interviews with division and/or bureau directors to confirm and expand the list of measures in place. The inventory includes all identified measures in place to measure general public satisfaction on an ongoing basis. The full results of the inventory are included in the Appendix, as are summaries of the interviews.

Our review found that current mechanisms in place to measure customer satisfaction for the general public fall into three categories:

- **Quantitative:** some divisions use surveys, response cards, or other measures that can be rated on a scale and analyzed with statistical tools<sup>2</sup>.
- **Qualitative:** some divisions with general public contact relied on qualitative tools such as focus groups or public information meetings to obtain information about customer priorities, concerns, or satisfaction.
- **Reactive:** in some cases, divisions report relying on reactive measures such as letters or calls with complaints/compliments.

#### ***QUANTITATIVE MEASURES***

In the case of quantitative measures in place, there are three divisions that use quantitative measures to assess customer satisfaction. Specifically:

**The Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) uses the following quantitative measures:**

<b>Tool</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Reviewed by</b>	<b>Report</b>
Comment Card (voluntary)  80,000/yr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timeliness</li> <li>• Service level (courtesy, etc.)</li> <li>• Office Efficiency</li> </ul>	Bureau Director, Division Administrator, District Managers  Weekly review	Summarized monthly at district level
Annual survey (random, distributed to every 10 <sup>th</sup> customer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timeliness</li> <li>• Courtesy</li> <li>• Availability of Service</li> </ul>	Same as above, plus supervisors  Annual review	Summarized annually in excel spreadsheet
Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timeliness</li> </ul>	Same as above  Monthly review	Summarized monthly at Bureau level

<sup>2</sup> We did encounter some quantitative surveys that have been done on an ad hoc basis examining a specific issue. For purposes of this review, our analysis focuses only on measures that are conducted on an ongoing basis.

Given the nature of the division's core business and its historical commitment to quality service, the DMV is a leader within WisDOT and other state DOTs in incorporating measures related to customer service. As such, the DMV is looked to internally as a model for service delivery standards. Additionally, the DMV has received national recognition for the CSI system it currently uses and which is an integral part of management decision making.

However, the DMV service measures are primarily used for tactical decision making and are not designed to solicit comprehensive customer satisfaction information that is crucial to strategic decisions such as budget or resource allocation and product development. The focus of the CSI is timeliness. This monthly index focuses on measuring process times for key services/products of high volume in comparison with established benchmarks. To supplement its measures of timeliness, the Division has begun development of a Customer Quality Index to measure other components of customer satisfaction (e.g. courtesy, accuracy). The system has been briefly piloted but is not fully implemented; other than that Bureau of Field Services comment cards have been modified to reflect the new measures.

For the measures that are fully implemented, DMV uses software such as Microsoft Excel, to compare results with established benchmarks. The gap between actual performance and the benchmarks (which were established with customer input from comment cards and focus groups) is then analyzed. Based on these comparisons, tactical decisions including short-term reallocation of resources and long-term staffing and resource allocation decisions are made.

The current measures and customer input systems used by DMV are a solid base on which to build. However, they need to be rounded out to incorporate a quality component that is driven by specific and quantifiable customer feedback.

**The Division of Transportation Infrastructure Development – Bureau of Highway Operations (BHO) has the following quantitative measure:**

<b>Tool</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Reviewed by</b>	<b>Report</b>
Highway maintenance survey (random phone survey of 1,000 people completed every two years)	Satisfaction with and importance of various maintenance activities	Bureau of Highway operations, Transportation Districts	Provides data overall and by district

BHO's survey measures overall satisfaction, satisfaction with specific services (such as highway signs, road strips/markings and rest areas). In addition, the survey asks for the importance of those services and attempts to determine where customers would allocate additional resources.

In the past, the Bureau has used correlation analysis and regression analysis (ordered probit) to evaluate the relative importance of service in determining overall satisfaction with highway operations. The Bureau is considering modifications to the customer survey to yield better information about customer preferences. A review of the BHO customer survey<sup>3</sup> found that several of the services attributes in the survey did not vary in their impact on satisfaction, that survey items could be consolidated, and that the current format of questions limits generalizability of results. Based on this review, the modifications currently underway are designed to enhance the extent to which the survey can be used for tactical decisions such as resource allocation and establishment of standards.

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<sup>3</sup> Review of the BHO Customer Survey conducted by Matthew Dull, draft report issued April 24, 2002.



**The Division of Transportation Districts – Bureau of Real Estate relies upon the following quantitative measure:**

<b>Tool</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Reviewed by</b>	<b>Report</b>
Survey of property owners (all property owners whose property has been acquired)	Satisfaction with knowledge, courtesy, responsiveness	Bureau of Real Estate, Transportation District Directors, Real Estate Supervisors	Summarized annually, individual results to districts

The Bureau of Real Estate uses the real estate survey to assess the extent to which customers are satisfied with the knowledge, courtesy and responsiveness of DOT Real Estate Agents and Appraisers. This information is analyzed using Microsoft Excel to identify patterns and trends over time and across divisions. The results are used at the operational level for employee performance development, and at the tactical level for decisions about training requirements within the Bureau.

#### ***QUALITATIVE MEASURES***

Qualitative measures obtain public input in a manner that cannot be statistically analyzed. Qualitative measures can include focus groups or public hearings. We found heavy reliance of qualitative measures in two divisions – the Division of Transportation Districts and the Division of Transportation Investment Management/Bureau of Planning.

The **Division of Transportation Districts** relies on focus groups, public hearings, and information sessions with the public to gain information about general public concerns or priorities (primarily as they relate to specific projects). In addition, this Division is implementing a new community sensitive design process that will enhance the role of qualitative general public feedback in the project design process.

Within the **Division of Transportation Investment Management, the Bureau of Planning** produces the department's modal plans, as well as the long-range plan for the Department. As part of these planning processes, the Bureau conducts numerous qualitative measures to gain general public input. These measures include focus groups, informational sessions, and public hearings.

#### ***REACTIVE MEASURES***

Reactive measures occur after a service has been delivered and include feedback that is provided by, but not actively sought from, the customer, such as a complaint logs. Reactive measures can supplement quantitative measures or can be used as a substitute for other forms of satisfaction measurement.

The **Division of Motor Vehicles** supplements its annual survey, comment cards, and customer satisfaction index with complaint tracking logs to measure courtesy and responsiveness. This information is used at the operational level for employee training and establishing process improvements (such as changes to service hours).

As is common among law enforcement agencies, the **State Patrol** relies exclusively on reactive measures. Specifically, the division monitors complaints and compliments, coupled with supervisor observations, to assess professionalism and courtesy of field staff from a customer perspective.

## ***OVERARCHING THEMES AND GAPS***

In our review of existing measures, several themes emerged. For a detailed list of all gaps identified (including those that do not relate to the department-wide mechanism), see Appendix B. Following is a summary of the recurring themes:

- **The Department lacks a department-wide mechanism to measure satisfaction and for use in strategic decision making such as budget/resource allocation.** Our review confirmed that there is no department-wide mechanism in place that can be used to compare customer satisfaction performance across divisions. Divisions vary greatly in the extent to which they have quantitative measures in place. Further, when quantitative measures are in place, divisions vary significantly in the attributes they measure and their definition of customer satisfaction. As the department recognizes, although there are often measures in place currently (the inventory cited above), this measure in its current form is not useful in guiding strategic decisions (the Department is to be commended for recognizing this fact, which is the underlying purpose of this project).
- **Varying levels of interaction with the general public lead to reliance on customer satisfaction information from other divisions.** We found that divisions within WisDOT vary greatly in the extent to which they have direct contact with the general public. The most contact occurs within DMV, State Patrol, and the Transportation Districts. Most other divisions are involved indirectly in ensuring service levels, but may not have any significant, direct general public contact. As a result, planning and support divisions rely on others to be the “eyes and ears” of the customer.
- **Where measures of customer priorities exist, these measures are primarily qualitative.** During interviews, many WisDOT staff recognized that the general public is often not aware of the services provided by WisDOT. As a result, the Department often finds that education is required prior to requesting feedback. Accordingly, focus groups and public discussions have often been used to determine customer priorities. One exception to this reliance is the BHO survey, which attempts to obtain information about customer priorities.
- **Where quantitative measures are in place, they vary greatly in timing, sampling strategies, scope and format.** The three quantitative measures of DMV, DTID, and DTD highlighted above are significantly different. For example, they occur on different timelines, use different sampling strategies (and in the case of the real estate survey no sampling strategy), measure different attributes (ranging from timeliness to professionalism and overall satisfaction), and are issued in different formats (the BHO survey is a telephone survey, while DMV and Real Estate surveys are mail surveys). The option of building a department-wide mechanism by adding questions to existing surveys must be considered. However, the significant differences among existing quantitative measures (coupled with the gaps where no quantitative measures are in place) would create significant obstacles to such a mechanism.
- **There are a large number of gaps in current measures for some divisions.** Many divisions do not have customer satisfaction data. As discussed in the focus group, the data available does not include information about customer priorities, or allow information to assist with strategic decisions such as resource allocation or staff deployment. In addition, there are gaps in tactical and operational information, such as method of contact preferred by the public. Finally, the department does not have an over-arching, consistent approach to customer complaints.

- **The Department conducts a large number of ad hoc quantitative surveys that have limited usefulness in ongoing decision making.** Our initial review of surveys at WisDOT indicated that a large number of surveys have been conducted. However, the usefulness of these surveys in decision making is limited by the fact that many are ad hoc or one-time surveys. As a result, they do not yield longitudinal information to allow comparisons of customer satisfaction over time.
- **Overall, there are limited circumstances where quantitative customer satisfaction information is used for decision making.** Even where measures are in place, for some there is no direct link of this information to key decision processes such as budgeting or resource allocation.
- **Measurement standards are static and may not reflect current customer priorities.** Customer satisfaction research agrees that customer values are dynamic and are based on a customer's experience in the real world. As such, measures related to customer priorities and expectations must be developed with a continual consideration of what a customer's experience has been in similar situations. The measures used by the DOT often are based on historical customer expectation information and in some cases are not updated on a continual basis to reflect a customer's "current" values. For example, the DMV CSI measure standards are based on a variety of things including qualitative information, previous customer focus groups and staff intuitive knowledge regarding what should be acceptable. However, they are not modified based on direct customer input received on a frequent basis. Even if the measures themselves do not change over time, the performance targets should be based on dynamic customer expectations.
- **Reactive and voluntary nature of many of the measures results in customer feedback at the extremes of the satisfaction continuum.** Several of the DOT customer feedback systems are reactive and rely on the customer to have been emotionally impacted enough to provide a response (either positive or negative). This does not allow DOT to determine the true levels of satisfaction for the majority of customers.

A detailed discussion of measures and gaps by Division and/or Bureau is included in the Appendix. (Note: Appendix B includes a discussion of all gaps, issues and concerns that came to our attention, even those that are outside the scope of Phase 3. We include them in hopes that they will be of assistance to the Department in other improvement initiatives.)

## ***PLAN TO INTEGRATE***

### **Key Features of Mechanism**

The first step in developing a plan for integrating the mechanism into decision making is the development of design criteria. To guide the development and the overall mechanism, and due to the fact that there is not consistent buy-in from all division administrators on the need for performance measures, or the need to tie customer satisfaction to measures of performance, we recommend that the tool should:

- Be easy to administer
- Require minimal analysis of data on the back end (i.e. be constructed with analysis in mind to facilitate interpretation and understanding)
- Balance the need to consider the unique services and products of each division with a need for data that can be compared across divisions
- Be able to be implemented and maintained at a reasonable cost
- Allow for flexibility over time while maintaining data that can be compared longitudinally

- Allow for integration with other measures (for non-general public divisions)
- Carefully define the parameters of the mechanism (recognize the limitations of the data and ensure that data are applied to decisions within a broader context)

Our review of best practices found that it is common for state transportation agencies to measure service quality attributes such as timeliness and courtesy. Measuring customer priorities presents a more significant challenge. While new research and analytical techniques such as conjoint studies<sup>4</sup> are increasingly being utilized, there is concern about the ability of individuals to rank diverse services such as motor vehicle registration and highway maintenance in a manner that is applicable to real world experience. Further, several department staff expressed concern that priority rankings must be obtained in a manner that is reliable.

While measuring “doing things right” can more easily be done, assessing whether the Department is doing the right things is more difficult. Phase 3 will continue to examine customer satisfaction from both perspectives. In addition to any direct priorities that can be obtained, we recommend that indirect information be used to supplement that data. Specifically, we recommend the following:

1. The tool should focus on satisfaction in comparison to customers expectations (i.e. acceptable levels of service) as one tool to shift resources (for example, by providing data regarding customer expectations for a particular service, and measuring actual performance compared to that expectation, the department can identify where additional resources may be required to meet expectations).
2. Within this context, a feasible mechanism would create common customer attributes across divisions, but would set customer-based standards within each division. Annual measurements would compare to the standards set through the initial survey and focus groups. For example:

Attribute	Standards*		
	DMV – Field	DSP-Field	Highways
Timeliness of Service	80% of Licensing customers receive product within 20 minutes	75% of survey respondents felt that roadside assistance was received in an acceptable amount of time	80% of survey respondents felt that disruption to travel was acceptable at less than 10 minutes being added to travel related to construction.
Professionalism	No more than 5% of DMV customers indicated that they were treated in an unprofessional manner while engaging in a licensing or registration transaction	No more than 10% of individuals stopped for a traffic enforcement issues rated professionalism of that stop as being unacceptable	No more than 5% of those involved in real estate transactions related to highway projects indicated that contact with DOT staff was unprofessional

\*Note: These are not recommended standards, but are presented to depict the sample standard framework.

<sup>4</sup> Conjoint studies ask survey respondents to state their preferences by ranking alternatives which consist of combinations of attributes.

3. Standards developed should be updated to ensure that changes in customer expectations are incorporated as time passes.
4. The mechanism should be conducted at least biennially, with both general questions and specific questions for each segment. The rating scales should remain constant over time to allow longitudinal analysis of data.
5. Customers should be segmented based on their interactions with DOT and to ensure that all identified segments are captured. This will require obtaining information about the contacts they have had with the Department.
6. Information should be gained regarding the most frequent point of contact with the department.
7. The Department should carefully consider for which decisions public input can be utilized and should articulate questions in a manner that the public can respond in an informed manner.

### **Integration of Mechanism into Decision Making**

Given that WisDOT has identified that the primary user of the department-wide mechanism will be the Board of Directors for strategic and/or tactical decisions, the mechanism will need to be integrated into key Department decision making processes. To facilitate that integration, we recommend:

- **The timeline for data collection and analysis of the mechanism should be integrated with timing of the strategic plan.** WisDOT conducts a two-year strategic planning process. Because the final mechanism will yield a department-wide measure of customer satisfaction, the timing of the mechanism must align with that of the strategic planning process. Strategic information should not change on a monthly or even quarterly basis. Common practice is to collect strategic measures semi-annually or annually. The timeframe for the mechanism must also be integrated with the Department's planning cycle – outlined below<sup>5</sup>:

To be integrated into the planning cycle, the mechanism should be gathered at least biennially (annual collection, if feasible from a cost perspective, would be ideal). The timing should occur so that the results and reports are available before the planning cycle begins.

- **The customer satisfaction mechanism should be timed in a manner to allow integration with the budget process.** The State is on a two-year budget cycle. Budget requests for the upcoming biennium are submitted in the September of even numbered years prior to the beginning of the fiscal year. The next strategic planning cycle begins in the month following budget submittal. Ideally, the results should be completed 3-4 months prior to the deadline for departmental budget submittal.
- **Ideally, the mechanism should be linked to other department-wide measures and strategic priorities such as efficiency, safety, partnership, and a quality workforce.** General public customer satisfaction is just one factor to be considered in department decision making (other factors such as efficiency and safety must be considered as well). To help ensure that the satisfaction mechanism is appropriately balanced with other measures, the Department should strive to establish similar collection and reporting timeframes for Department-wide measures. For example, collecting and analyzing results of the employee survey along with the results of the customer satisfaction survey can help identify interrelationships between the two and assist with developing action plans. Reports depicting data for Department-wide strategic measures should present data for measures for all emphasis areas as outlined in the strategic plan.
- **The department should strive to develop cascading measures to assist in customer satisfaction management.** The scope of the department-wide mechanism will be limited,

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<sup>5</sup> Figure taken from the Department's 2001 Forward Award Application, figure 2.1.

and is not designed to address all customer satisfaction issues within each division. To address remaining gaps (for tactical or operational information) or to address areas not directly serving the general public, the Department should supplement the department-wide mechanism with cascading measures of satisfaction. Cascading measures are measures at the strategic, tactical, and operational levels. Cascading accountability for achieving goals should be established from the Administrator to the Director and through the organization to individual work teams and employees.

- **The Department should establish a reporting framework that reinforces linkages to strategic decisions and accountability systems.** For the mechanism to add value to the department, it must be used in decisions. The frequency, format, and timing of reports should be structured to enable use of the information in decisions. In addition, the Department should develop a framework that reinforces accountability. For example, division business plans should incorporate measures, to the extent possible, and quarterly reports should include actions taken to affect the satisfaction measure (or explanations as to what actions are not taken).
- **Accountability systems should establish linkages to divisions without significant interaction with the general public.** The accountability system should integrate divisions that do not have key products or services delivered directly to the general public. For example, the external satisfaction mechanism can be integrated with other customer satisfaction measures (for internal customers or other customer groups). In addition, the strategic measures should be viewed as owned by the department as a whole. For example, if customer expectations are not met with current levels of highway maintenance, direct service divisions such as the districts, as well as other divisions such as DTID bureau of highway operations and DTIM can all play a role in developing policies and processes and allocating resources to ensure that expectations are met.

- **The Department should establish a strategic performance measure based upon this mechanism.** Within the context of the design framework outlined above, this measure can be as simple as the percent of customer satisfaction standards met and the percent of overall satisfaction. In addition to a department-wide performance measure, cascading measures should be developed (for example, tracking standards and satisfaction specifically within DMV over time to identify progress made or improvements required). These cascading measures can be reported more frequently and incorporated into division business plans.
- **Division quarterly business plans should track improvements and document actions taken to affect overall satisfaction.** Building accountability for results of the mechanism is a crucial to ensuring that the data can be used not only for decisions, but also for guiding improvement initiatives. Accordingly, division quarterly business plans should include documentation of actions that have been taken to improve or maintain satisfaction, as well as division measures that provide tactical information to support overall satisfaction.
- **The mechanism should be conducted and results reported at least biennially (preferable annually).** The reports should include an overview of the mechanism, rationale, and results. To the extent possible, the Department should also integrate the results into other reports such as strategic scorecard reports.
- **The Department should establish a communication plan to report the results of the mechanism.** In addition to providing information for strategic and tactical decisions, the mechanism can be used to communicate progress and rationales to the public, stakeholders, and legislators. Some states, including Florida, issue their report card to the media to depict results on measures such as customer satisfaction.

In addition to these guidelines and recommendations, the Phase 3 report will include a sample report outline.

## Challenges

As the Department implements a department-wide customer satisfaction mechanism, there are several challenges that should be recognized:

- **Education:** The general public's knowledge of specific services and products provided by the Department may be limited. Accordingly, the mechanism should recognize this fact and incorporate education into the mechanism to enhance the reliability of results.
- **Range of Services:** WisDOT provides a diverse range of services, including some with a very long-term focus. As indicated above, this broad range of services poses challenges for developing a mechanism to allow meaningful comparisons of customer satisfaction across services.
- **Need for Balanced Measures:** Due to the nature of services provided by the Department, the final department-wide customer satisfaction mechanism will need to be balanced not only with other strategic measures such as safety, but also with satisfaction information for other customer groups.
- **Service Delivery Model:** The Department relies heavily on third-party contractors to deliver services. Thus the tactical or operational improvements that may be identified from the measure may need to be implemented with contractors as well as employees.

## ***OVERVIEW AND APPROACH***

The second phase of this project consisted of research to identify best practices nationwide relating to: the identification, implementation, and integration of effective and efficient customer satisfaction measures, customer segmentation strategies, data collection mechanisms, and analytical methods. To identify these practices, we focused on state departments of Transportation to ensure that the practices identified would be applicable to WisDOT. As a state DOT, the Department faces numerous challenges in developing and integrating customer satisfaction information. Not only is the range of products and services diverse, but many products and services have a safety, regulatory, or compliance component. This creates an extremely complex environment in which to manage and to deploy customer satisfaction information to aid in decision making. Accordingly, we focused our research on identifying best practices within the realm of state departments of Transportation.

To complete this phase, we conducted both primary and secondary research to identify current and best practices in transportation customer satisfaction research. We received the highest levels of cooperation from all those contacted for this research. In particular, we wish to thank Matthew Dull of the Bureau of Highway Operations, who shared the results of his analysis of highway operations research with us.

The results of this phase are separated into four sections. The first section highlights themes that emerged from the research, the second presents results of our secondary research, the third contains summaries of some best practices identified during the course of our primary research. Finally, we present summary information for each department of transportation that participated in our primary research process.

## ***CURRENT PRACTICES IN DOT CUSTOMER SATISFACTION RESEARCH***

Through our primary and secondary research, we identified several types of customer satisfaction research being conducted. The first type is the direct observation focus group. Several states, including Kansas and Missouri, conduct 'road rallies' – i.e. focus groups facilitated while groups of citizens are driven along roads. This type of initiative is generally designed to obtain some feedback, but also largely serves as a public relations tool or method of communicating with the public.

The second type of satisfaction research is the highway specific satisfaction survey. Several states that do not include motor vehicles within the Department of Transportation conduct only highway specific research within the Department of Transportation. These studies typically measure satisfaction with current levels of service and/or measure customer priorities for service attributes.

A third type of customer research in transportation is the use of conjoint analysis to identify customer preferences for different modes of transportation. Studies of this type focus on customers' valuation of reduced trip time, transportation improvements, and transit options. The use of conjoint analysis, which poses hypothetical situations and trade-offs is designed to overcome concerns about the validity of survey results wherein respondents are asked to prioritize independent attributes without facing any trade-offs or valuation.



This type of conjoint study is slowly being incorporated into other customer satisfaction research. For example, in a step toward a more context sensitive survey, some studies such as that conducted by Oregon DOT present respondents with a pair of options and ask them to select between the two. However, although these studies are in limited use, we found no cases where they have been used to provide comparisons across services (such as between services provided by the division of motor vehicles and that of highway maintenance).

## **RESULTS OF SECONDARY RESEARCH**

**Approach:** We conducted a review of prior studies and surveys of customer satisfaction mechanisms within the transportation arena. We reviewed the Web sites of professional and technical organizations, including AASHTO and the Transportation Research Board. We reviewed two reports on current practices, including *Using Customer Needs to Drive Transportation Decisions* by the National Cooperative Highway Research Program, Transportation Research Board, and the AASHTO Standing Committee on Quality *Survey of Transportation Organizations 2000 Knowledge Sharing Database*.

**Results:** We identified several best practices that have been adapted and included in the Phase 1 report. Specifically,

- Several agencies use the customer satisfaction research reports as a primary communication tool with the public. For example, Florida issues a report card, with the results of its satisfaction survey and has had great success with the media in reporting results. Recommendations for use of the tool as a communication and accountability mechanism are included in the Phase 1 report.
- Some departments combine multiple research tools to overcome inherent barriers in surveying a public that may not be educated about transportation service providers. For example, Missouri uses a combination of focus groups, surveys, and facilitated field observations during the course of its multi-phase research initiative.
- In some cases, departments use multiple measures to ensure a balanced approach to integrating customer satisfaction information into department decision making. For example, Washington State incorporates a balanced scorecard approach, with measures ranging from customer satisfaction to safety.

## **PRIMARY RESEARCH**

**Approach:** We conducted an initial investigation of customer satisfaction programs of state departments of transportation in an effort to identify a smaller number of departments whose work would be of particular interest in this study. We then searched the Web sites of all 50 departments of transportation, plus Puerto Rico's Department of Transportation and Public Works. We focused on customer satisfaction programs that seemed to be broadly used and integrated within the department, those that periodically measured and reported customer satisfaction, and those that were focused across departmental divisions. From these sites, we earmarked a smaller number of departments for further study.

The departments of transportation that generously took time out to assist WisDOT during the second phase of this process included:

- Florida Department of Transportation
- Kansas Department of Transportation
- Minnesota Department of Transportation

- Oregon Department of Transportation
- Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
- Virginia Department of Transportation
- Arizona Department of Transportation

Upon recognizing some of the unique challenges in measuring customer satisfaction within the State Patrol, we also specifically contacted State Patrol/Police in Illinois, Iowa, Michigan and Minnesota to see what, if any, customer satisfaction measures they had in place. Illinois State Police and Iowa State Patrol both have recently conducted customer satisfaction measures, with Illinois doing it on a continuing basis (every 3 years). Skeptics of the willingness of customers to provide positive customer feedback to law enforcement would be surprised to learn that, in their 2000 survey, the Illinois State Police found that almost 85 percent of respondents who'd had non-voluntary contact with the ISP felt that they were treated fairly. Nearly 8 of 10 indicated that the officer was courteous.

**Results:** The best practices section, which follows, emphasizes specific programs and procedures in use by departments of transportation across the country. Some highlights:

- Kansas DOT's "Road Rally" brings together 5 to 7 of the general public to ride in a bus along with professional moderators, reporting their feelings about a number of different types of roads while they use them
- The New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department requires that all requests for budget adjustments include an estimate of that adjustment on one of the Department's strategic goals
- Minnesota DOT has segmented their customers into seven different groups, and has performed satisfaction studies based on these segments

## **OVERVIEW OF BEST PRACTICES FROM PRIMARY RESEARCH**

### **BEST PRACTICE: ROAD RALLY, KANSAS DOT**

#### ***Program Overview:***

During the summer of 2001, the Kansas Department of Transportation conducted Road Rallies with a randomly recruited sample of Kansas residents. More than 500 persons from 10 counties participated in Road Rallies that were held in six locations.

Upon arrival, participants were given an overview of the course and directions on how to complete the survey. Those attending were then divided into small groups of approximately 5-7 persons each. The groups then boarded 15-passenger vans. A professional moderator accompanied each of the groups during the course to facilitate the administration of the survey to ensure consistent interpretation of the questions.

Each course consisted of 11-19 different sections of highway. The route was designed to ensure that participants would be exposed to a wide range of highways with regard both to the type and condition of the highway.

#### ***Program Purpose:***

- Identify features that Kansas residents think are most important on different types of highway,
- Determine expectations for the condition of Kansas highways, and
- Objectively measure perceptions about priorities for the State's highway system.

#### ***Program Highlights:***

- Attendance at the Road Rally significantly exceeded expectations. Of the 600 residents who were recruited, more than 500 attended.
- Two importance ratings methods, direct (i.e., asking respondents to rank importance of highway features) and inferred (i.e. using statistical correlations to determine which feature had the greatest impact on overall satisfaction with the road) were used.
- Using regression analysis to correlate overall feelings about highways to specific attributes of each highway showed that the physical condition of the highway to be of the greatest importance regardless of highway type.

**BEST PRACTICE:      GRAY NOTEBOOK, WASHINGTON STATE DOT**

***Program Overview:***

The Washington State DOT's quarterly performance measurement report, also known as the "Gray Notebook" because of its cover color, is designed to keep the DOT accountable to the Transportation Commission and the public. Published quarterly, it contains reports on WSDOT performance in relation to state goals or expected performance. For instance, current quarter and historical number of accidents per 100 highway construction workers, along with an accepted benchmark line, is reported.

The Gray Notebook has been constructed under the maxim, "What gets measured, gets managed." Each department responsible for a particular performance measurement is responsible also for writing the corresponding section of the report.

***Subject Headings (Measurement Example):***

- Worker Safety (Recordable injuries per 100 highway maintenance workers per year)
- Highway Construction Program (Number of Actual vs. Planned Highway Construction Projects)
- Highway Safety (Number of Actual vs. Planned Low Cost Safety Enhancement Projects)
  - Also lists High Accident Locations (HALs) and High Accident Corridors (HACs) throughout the state and proposes ways to reduce accidents in these areas
- Highway Maintenance Program Delivery (Actual vs. Planned Miles Roadstripe Painted)
- Freeway Operational Efficiency Strategies (Current vs. Historical Average Incident Response Time)
- Pavement Conditions of the State Highway System (Pavement Conditions Trend, showing % of pavement in good condition and in poor condition)
- Bridge Assessment Program (Actual vs. Planned Bridge Painting Projects)
- Commute Trip Reduction (WSDOT Park & Ride Lot Occupancy Rates in the Puget Sound Region)
- Environmental Programs (Percent of All Fish Barriers Fixed)
- Washington State Ferries (Total Customer Complaints Per 100,000 Customers)
- State-Supported Amtrak Cascades Service (On-Time Percentage)
- Highlights of Program Activities
- Special Features

**BEST PRACTICE: THE COMPASS, NEW MEXICO SHTD**

***Program Overview<sup>6</sup>:***

**The Compass is a yearly publication that outlines 17 “results” based on goals that come directly from the SHTD’s strategic vision. These goals:**

- Smooth roads to provide safe, efficient travel
- Safe transportation system through continuous reduction in motor vehicle crash deaths and injuries
- More access to divided highways to increase safety and stimulate economic activity
- Increased support for intermodal facilities and nonhighway freight shipments to improve efficiency in moving goods and promote effective use of existing infrastructure
- Adequate funding and prudent management of resources in order to meet more of our customers’ needs
- Less traffic congestion and pollution to improve transportation efficiency and quality of life
- Maintenance of facilities, equipment, highways, and highway rights of way to improve quality of life and extend limited resources in order to meet our customers’ needs
- Improved communication to better understand and serve our customers
- Cost effective/ high-quality transportation systems to extend limited resources in order to meet our customers’ needs
- Satisfied, productive, challenged, appreciated, respected, involved, accountable, motivated, and innovative employees in order to provide a quality product for our customers
- Increased accessibility for transportation alternatives to meet customer needs
- Timely completion of construction/maintenance projects, with the least amount of interference to the traveling public, to increase the efficiency of the highway system for our customers
- Realistic Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to better manage limited resources in order to meet more of our customers’ needs
- Good transportation systems to provide economic benefits and produce more jobs and businesses for New Mexico
- Stable letting schedule to better manage limited resources in order to meet more of our customers’ needs
- Department will be recognized as the leader for transportation issues important to New Mexico
- Improve communication to better understand and serve our employees

The Department’s budgeting process has been modified to require linkage of every budget request to a specific result. The first budget cycle using this method provides a baseline for future decisions regarding performance expenditure investments and allows prioritization of expenditures by department subdivisions. All budget adjustments require an explanation of their impact on management results and how the adjustment will improve a performance measurement.

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<sup>6</sup> For more information, see:

[http://www.nmshtd.state.nm.us/general/gen\\_depts/gen\\_depts\\_quality/compass2000/default.asp](http://www.nmshtd.state.nm.us/general/gen_depts/gen_depts_quality/compass2000/default.asp)

***Examples of Performance Measurements:***

- 1a. Ride Quality Index for Interstate and non-Interstate highways
- 1b. Project Profilograph – composite weighted mean average for all measured construction projects

Each Performance Measurement contains a summary of:

- 1. Purpose
- 2. Data Collection
- 3. Measurement
- 4. Improvement

Although development of such a system is clearly outside the scope of this project, we include this as an example of developing balanced performance measures and integrating those measures into decision making processes.

## **BEST PRACTICE: MN/DOT CUSTOMER SEGMENTATION**

### ***Practice Overview:***

Mn/DOT segments its customers based on the reason that a particular customer has used a service provided by Mn/DOT. Each customer segment was surveyed separately and the data received from each group was analyzed separately.

Mn/DOT customers are segmented by region:

- Metro; Twin Cities area customers
- Greater Minnesota; customers everywhere else

and by type of customer:

- Commuter
- Personal Traveler
- Farmer
- Emergency Vehicle Operator
- Commercial Carrier
- Shipper
- Intermodal Operator

Clearly, most customers will belong to more than one segment. Mn/DOT deals with this reality by asking its respondents to give their opinions and report their priorities based on their experiences only as one type of customer. That is, a person who both commutes to work and drives to the grocery store would be considered a member of both the Commuter and Personal Traveler segments. During the phone survey, this person would be asked to comment only on, for instance, their experiences as a commuter.

This is used as a marketing tool and a way to determine priorities for different segments. For instance, press releases by Mn/DOT could presumably be tailored to address the specific priorities of whatever customer segment the release is targeted towards.

### ***Practice Highlights:***

Mn/DOT found that:

- Products and services relating to the roadway itself were of highest importance to all segments
- A number of segments previously viewed as unique may on occasion be collectively served equally well by the same communication
- "Improving heavily traveled routes between cities for better movement of freight and travelers" was of highest importance to six of seven segments
- The most unique segment is the farmer segment
- Each segment is not equally satisfied

**BEST PRACTICE: TRANSPORTATION NEEDS AND ISSUES SURVEY, OREGON DOT**

***Program Overview:***

The Transportation Needs and Issues Survey was performed in 2001 by the Oregon Survey Research Laboratory (OSRL) at the University of Oregon. It is a survey that covered topics of broad interest to ODOT, such as overall customer satisfaction and customer priorities for ODOT initiatives. Since the WisDOT project is concerned with integrating customer satisfaction programs and discerning customer priorities over different divisions – offering different products and serving different customers – the ODOT survey is of particular significance. In particular, two question formats, pairwise prioritization questions and program importance questions, may apply to the current problem.

***Sample Questions:***

- Pairwise Prioritization questions

The ODOT survey did not extensively employ this type of question; the survey is quite lengthy, which may have been a consideration.

**Example:** Do you think it is more important for the Oregon Department of Transportation to give priority to maintaining highways, roads, and bridges we already have instead of building new ones?

This use of this type of question could be expanded to include four or five main categories of priorities. Survey results could then be used to generate some estimate of a consensus in the population.

- Program Importance questions

**Example:** Please tell me if you think transportation services for the elderly and disadvantaged are very important, somewhat important, or not important (for spending state resources and money).

Again, analysis of a group of these types of questions could generate some estimate of a consensus in the population.



***PRIMARY RESEARCH - INDIVIDUAL STATE SUMMARIES***

<b>General Information</b>	
Name of Organization	<b>Pennsylvania Department of Transportation</b>
Contact Name	Joe Robinson, Jr.
Telephone Number	717.787.6343
E-Mail Address	robinso@dot.state.pa.us
<b>Background and Implementation Questions</b>	
What services does the DOT provide?	Administration, highways, driver licensing / motor vehicles, aviation, bus and rail (including shared rider program), and planning
What is the customer satisfaction mechanism?	Most of PennDot's areas have mechanisms in place to assess satisfaction. 67,000 CSI surveys are administered annually. There is also an annual telephone survey (QUIK) asking customers to comment on their satisfaction as well as their awareness of existing services, and any thoughts on future services.
How long has the survey been in place?	Both CSI and QUIK surveys have been in place since 1995
Has it changed? What prompted these changes?	The CSI survey changed after 1999 following additional input from an outside contractor; the purpose of this change was to develop the survey into a more actionable tool
How was the survey developed?	External consultant
What prompted original development of the survey?	The Department made a commitment to regard PA citizens as customers; this necessitated finding out whether PennDOT was meeting their needs
What other mechanisms are in place to measure customer satisfaction or priorities?	No highway project is started without a Town Meeting to allow local input; PennDOT has formal Customer Advisory Boards (CAB) in place in every county. PennDOT uses Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and Local Development District (LDD) groups to assist with long-range highway planning.
<b>Data Collection Questions</b>	
How much is spent annually on the mechanism?	\$75,000 for CSI surveys
How is customer satisfaction defined for the purposes of the mechanism?	Five-point Likert scale (A for excellent to F for failing)
What services are included in the survey?	Highway only: ride quality; traffic flow; safety; all with numerous sub-attributes
How often is the information collected?	Annually
How is information collected?	By mail
What is the sample size? What is the sampling strategy?	1000 surveys per county, selected randomly from DMV records
Is data collection done internally or externally?	Externally
Who "owns" (i.e., is responsible for the completion of) the mechanism?	The Center for Performance Excellence
<b>Data Analysis and Reported Questions</b>	
How are customers segmented?	Data is analyzed based on age, gender, urban/suburban/rural, and CDL/noncommercial driver
How is the information used?	A report is provided to each of the County Managers. They are charged with following up on the comments and using the results in their next planning cycle to develop action plans.
To whom are reports distributed?	In addition to County Managers, Executive Staff and District Engineers

<b>General Information</b>	
Name of Organization	<b>Oregon Department of Transportation</b>
Contact Name	Andrew Griffith
Telephone Number	503.986.3538
E-Mail Address	<a href="mailto:Andrew.S.Griffith@odot.state.or.us">Andrew.S.Griffith@odot.state.or.us</a>
<b>Background and Implementation Questions</b>	
What services does the DOT provide?	DMV; Motor Carrier; Transportation Development (planning, research, policy, data); Highway-Bridge; Roadway Design; Right of Way; Maintenance; Pavements; Construction; Materials Lab
What is the customer satisfaction mechanism?	Customer satisfaction is assessed through surveys. ODOT has an interagency agreement with the University of Oregon Survey Research Laboratory (OSRL) to conduct surveys. Most surveys are conducted on a situation-specific basis, e.g., "Goshen-Pheasant Lane Section (Business and Motorist Survey)". Also, ODOT's Office of Maintenance uses Oregon State University's Survey Research Center to do an annual survey as a report card for things like pavement maintenance, bridge maintenance, highway condition, etc.
How long has the survey been in place?	Five years
Has it changed? What prompted these changes?	More and more surveys are being administered in order to be more sensitive to customer needs, perceptions, values, and priorities.
How was the survey developed?	Surveys are developed jointly by ODOT, the appropriate person(s) within the agency who will use the survey data, and OSRL.
What prompted original development of the survey?	(not really sure) A realization within the department that it needed to be more in tune with public's requirements
What other mechanisms are in place to measure customer satisfaction or priorities?	A toll free number to give feedback to ODOT. An employee in the Director's Office monitors these calls to completion.
<b>Data Collection Questions</b>	
How much is spent annually on the mechanism?	\$250,000 in 3 years to OSRL
How is customer satisfaction defined for the purposes of the mechanism?	Difficulty has been encountered due to the wide range of issues covered. One state-wide survey is administered that, for overall feelings about ODOT, uses the scale Very Positive, Somewhat Positive, Somewhat Negative, Very Negative, DK.
What services are included in the survey?	Varies by survey
How often is the information collected?	4-5 surveys per year
How is information collected?	CATI or intercept surveys, for a majority of the surveys. Some mail surveys.
What is the sample size? What is the sampling strategy?	Typical sample size is about 400, giving a +/-5% margin of error using 95% confidence interval
Is data collection done internally or externally?	Externally, with ODOT personnel used for training of interviewers and to consult during interviews
Who "owns" (i.e., is responsible for the completion of) the mechanism?	---
<b>Data Analysis and Reported Questions</b>	
How are customers segmented?	Depends on survey.
How is the information used?	Survey results are used in research reports, to assess the effectiveness of some facet of ODOT's processes. The are also used by the ODOT Communications Division to help understand customer needs.
To whom are reports distributed?	For research that includes survey data, there is a standard distribution throughout the Department.

<b>General Information</b>		
Name of Organization	Minnesota Department of Transportation	
Contact Name	Karla Rains	
Telephone Number	651.284.3886	
E-Mail Address	karla.rains@dot.state.mn.us	
<b>Background and Implementation Questions</b>		
What services does the DOT provide?		
What is the customer satisfaction mechanism?	There are three main mechanisms: the Omnibus Tracking is designed to ask a variety of questions from multiple departments; the Perception Tracking is Twin Cities-based and is designed to track usage and attitudes towards traffic management tools; and the Maintenance Study.	
How long has the survey been in place?	In parts since 1988, and consistently since 1994	
Has it changed? What prompted these changes?	The function served by the Maintenance Study has recently been transferred to the Omnibus Study, to save costs. Some questions have been refined in order to more accurately gauge customer feelings, at the expense of continuous trend lines.	
How was the survey developed?	The Market Research department performs the following steps with any new project: 1 - Develop background information; 2 - Describe specific problem or question; 3 - Determine expectations for new project; 4 - Determine what decisions within Mn/DOT will be made with the new information (seen as especially important step); 5 - Determine who the stakeholders in the new project are; and 6 - Link the research to Mn/DOT strategic objectives.	
What prompted original development of the survey?	Desire to learn if changes being made were having the intended effect	
What other mechanisms are in place to measure customer satisfaction or priorities?	Projects with wider scopes have been performed to give Mn/DOT a 'big picture' perspective. These help Mn/DOT identify customer priorities and those areas that require further research.	
<b>Data Collection Questions</b>		
How much is spent annually on the mechanism?	\$30,000-\$50,000 per project	
How is customer satisfaction defined for the purposes of the mechanism?	7 or greater on a 10-point scale	
What services are included in the survey?	Highway only	
How often is the information collected?	Depends on the survey	
What is the sample size? What is the sampling strategy?	Through focus groups and by phone. Random digit dialing is most often used.	
Is data collection done internally or externally?	Goal is +/-3 or 4% at the 95% confidence level	
Who "owns" (i.e., is responsible for the completion of) the mechanism?	Externally	
<b>Data Analysis and Reported Questions</b>		
How are customers segmented?	Mn/DOT Office of Communications and Public Relations	
How is the information used?	In the Segmentation Study: Metro (Twin Cities) vs. Greater Minnesota (other), and by type of interaction (e.g., commuters, farmers, emergency vehicle operators, etc.) Customers could be considered part of more than one segment, but were asked to answer questions only related to their experiences as members of that particular customer segment)	
To whom are reports distributed?	Research is used both at a tactical level and for department-wide reports of progress Reports go to those departments requesting the information. Often, managers, directors and top staff receive copies. Also, every study is made available over Mn/DOT intranet and at the Department Library.	

<b>General Information</b>		
Name of Organization	Kansas Department of Transportation	
Contact Name	Ronald W. McMurray	
Telephone Number	785.296.3597	
E-Mail Address	---	
<b>Background and Implementation Questions</b>		
What services does the DOT provide?	Road and bridge maintenance; transportation planning, data collection and evaluation; project scoping, designing and letting; contract compliance; inspection of materials and labor; federal program funding administration and administrative support	
What is the customer satisfaction mechanism?	Customer survey and road rally (see "Best Practice" section)	
How long has the survey been in place?	Since 1997	
Has it changed? What prompted these changes?	---	
How was the survey developed?	---	
What prompted original development of the survey?	---	
What other mechanisms are in place to measure customer satisfaction or priorities?	---	
<b>Data Collection Questions</b>		
How much is spent annually on the mechanism?	---	
How is customer satisfaction defined for the purposes of the mechanism?	Customer satisfaction is defined as % of respondents who report 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale	
What services are included in the survey?	Highway only	
How often is the information collected?	Annually	
How is information collected?	Phone survey and focus group	
What is the sample size? What is the sampling strategy?	Last survey contained 1848 responses, corresponding to +/- 2.2% on a 95% confidence interval	
Is data collection done internally or externally?	Externally	
Who "owns" (i.e., is responsible for the completion of) the mechanism?	Office of Management and Budget	
<b>Data Analysis and Reported Questions</b>		
How are customers segmented?	Only by region	
How is the information used?	Provides KDOT with an overall evaluation of the delivery of transportation services from the customer perspective; measures changes in customer expectations and satisfaction in the areas of maintenance, safety, highway features, and transportation priorities since 1997; Ga	
To whom are reports distributed?	---	

<b>General Information</b>	
Name of Organization	Florida Department of Transportation
Contact Name	Monica Zhong
Telephone Number	
E-Mail Address	monica.zhong@dot.state.fl.us
<b>Background and Implementation Questions</b>	
What services does the DOT provide?	First survey with systematic approach done in 2000; another similar survey in 2002
What is the customer satisfaction mechanism?	
How long has the survey been in place?	2002 survey will be different than 2000 in that only a few specialized groups will be covered, and the focus is more on what customers feel is important, what improvements they have noticed, and what new concerns they may have.
Has it changed? What prompted these changes?	A consultant did focus groups to identify and prioritize needs and expectations of DOT customers. Focus groups were performed for customer segments (urban, rural, and transitioning) and regions.
How was the survey developed?	The department shifted focus to the Sterling Process
What prompted original development of the survey?	ROW office conducts surveys regularly. The Florida Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged also conducts surveys regularly.
<b>Data Collection Questions</b>	
How much is spent annually on the mechanism?	\$150,000 every two years
How is customer satisfaction defined for the purposes of the mechanism?	"Strongly Agree" or "Agree" with statements based on transportation issues identified by our customers as important and/or needing improvement
What services are included in the survey?	Highway and highway planning, airports, truck weighing
How often is the information collected?	Every two years
How is information collected?	Telephone and mail survey, with some hand delivery for specialized groups
What is the sample size? What is the sampling strategy?	Residential and commercial drivers were contacted by telephone survey (the sample was stratified, 6% in each region and 2.3% statewide). For government officials and well elders, a mail survey was used. Surveys were hand-delivered to property and business owners.
Is data collection done internally or externally?	Mostly externally
Who "owns" (i.e., is responsible for the completion of) the mechanism?	FDOT Staff
<b>Data Analysis and Reported Questions</b>	
How are customers segmented?	Residential drivers, commercial drivers, government officials, elderly drivers, property owners, and visitors to Florida. Each group is divided into FDOTS 7 districts while a statewide sample was applied to well elders and visitors.
How is the information used?	Executive management looks at the results and identifies four statewide issues to address. The 7 districts each look at their own results and identify areas for improvement.
To whom are reports distributed?	A "Report Card" was prepared and distributed to the media. It received press coverage, especially on local radio stations. Within FDOT, its partners and anyone else who is interested is getting a copy.

# APPENDIX 1A – INVENTORY SPREADSHEET

TYPE	SPONSOR	Bureau	EFFORT	CUSTOMER GROUPS	ATTRIBUTES MEASURED	FREQUENCY	RESPONSIBILITY	METHOD	REPORT FORMAT AND FREQUENCY	REPORT DISTRIBUTION	ANALYTICAL SOFTWARE	DECISIONS
Quantitative	DMV	All	Customer Quality Index	Driver license holders and Motor Vehicle Owners	Accuracy Responsiveness Customer Courtesy	Piloted - not implemented on full time basis	Collaborative effort - CQI team of managers/supervisors	Survey - piloted only	Report template established	All bureau directors and managers	Excel	To make decisions regarding employee training and areas of customer service improvement
Quantitative	DMV	BVS	Dealer complaint service evaluation	Customers with dealer complaints	Responsiveness Courtesy	ongoing	Section Chief	Mail survey				Shan amount of information from general public customers, more aimed at dealer customers
Quantitative	DMV	BVS	BVS special plates & parking citation unit service quality	Traveling public	Courtesy	March, April June 2000	Section Chief	Mail survey	One time summary provided	Section Chief and Supervisors		To improve unit service delivery Follow-up on
Quantitative	DMV	BFS	BFS Customer comment cards	MVCSC walk-in customers	Timeliness Courtesy	Daily	Individual employees, DMV teams forward to BFS, analysis - District Managers, Bureau Director	Comment cards	Monthly reports at district level. Bureau collects data. Actual cards returned	Administrator, Bureau Director, District Managers (provide to supervisors, team leaders)	Excel/Word	complaints, identify operational needs improvements, staffing, office hours, services
Quantitative	DMV	BFS	Biannual BFS Service hours survey	MVCSC customers	Timeliness Service Availability	Annually	District managers (collect/analysis), bureau director (analysis)	Survey	Annual report	Bureau Director, District Managers (provide to supervisors, team leaders)	Survey Pro	Variances year to year, trends analysis, hours changes, staffing, customer service enhancements
Quantitative	DMV	BFS	Phone service expectations	Motor vehicle External customers or partners (such as HS, School Bus Assoc, Law Enf. instructors, comm. Driving schools, law enf. etc	Timeliness Responsiveness	As needed	Phone center managers	Survey	Periodic	DMV Field and BVS managers	Survey Pro	Assessment of phone service: Timeliness Responsiveness
Quantitative	DMV	BFS	Outreaches - such as Parents High at HS, School Bus Assoc, Law Enf. Town mtgs, Driver Ed conference, community	customers or partners (such as school bus assoc, driver ed instructors, comm. Driving schools, law enf. etc	Varies	Ongoing - some are annually scheduled, others are as they come up throughout the year	Managers report quarterly to the Bureau (BFS projects) mixture of internal and external projects	Outreach	Quarterly (BFS projects) includes internal and external	BFS, BVS, BDS management	Word	NA
Reactive	DMV	BFS	Complaint tracking logs	DMV CSC users	Courtesy Responsiveness	Ongoing	Supervisors, managers	Complaint log	Follow-up to customer, district tracking (varies by manager)	Manager, supervisor	Excel/work	Employee training and discipline needs Changes to service hours
Quantitative	DMV	ALL	Customer Satisfaction Index	General public	Timeliness	Ongoing	Line staff in individual units whose products are measured for the CSI	Workload statistic reporting	Weekly, monthly, and annual reports presented on an excel spreadsheet	Weekly: Division management Monthly/ Annual: all staff	Excel	Short-term - shows trouble spots where adtl resources needed, Long-term for FTE and resource allocation

TYPE	SPONSOR	Bureau	EFFORT	CUSTOMER GROUPS	ATTRIBUTES MEASURED	FREQUENCY	RESPONSIBILITY	METHOD	REPORT FORMAT AND FREQUENCY	REPORT DISTRIBUTION	ANALYTICAL SOFTWARE	DECISIONS
Quantitative	DMV/Vehicle Services	PART OF CSI	Dealer Section Customer satisfaction index	Licensed car dealers, salespeople, and consumers who file dealer complaints	Timeliness	weekly	Designated line staff in individual units whose products are measured for the CSI. Analysis by section Program Specialist	Data from database reports and phone system reports	Weekly, monthly and annual reports presented on an Excel spreadsheet	Weekly reports are reviewed by division management, monthly and annual reports are shared with all staff	None	Short-term, shows trouble spots where additional resources are most needed; long-term for FTE and resource allocation
Quantitative	DMV/Vehicle Services	PART OF CSI	Motor Carrier Services customer sat. index	Motor carriers, service bureaus, and insurance companies	Timeliness	weekly	Line staff compile information		Weekly, monthly and annual reports presented on an Excel spreadsheet	Weekly reports are reviewed by division management, monthly and annual reports are shared with all staff	None	Short-term, shows trouble spots where additional resources are most needed; long-term for FTE and resource allocation
Qualitative	DSP	Field Services	Customer complaint log	Wisconsin traveling public - in and out of state residents	Courtesy	Reactive - upon customer initiation	Field Services central office staff compile log and determine appropriate response to complaint	Varies - generally involves investigation of DSP employee	Annual report of complaints	DSP manager, immediate report of complaint to impacted supervisors and district managers	None	Discipline decisions
Qualitative				Affected publics, legislators, local off. businesses, special interest groups, other state & federal agencies, consultants, road builders, and media	Various	As needed	District Director, Project Staff, District Communication Manager(DCM)		Results are summarized to respective district, division, and department staff.	Public Communication Records are submitted to WisDOT central office, if warranted	NA	Intent is to inform affected publics, answer questions, and address concerns, gather information/concerns and identify potentially affected interests.
Qualitative	DTD	District - various	Public meetings	Affected publics, legislators, local off. businesses, special interest groups, other state & federal agencies, consultants, road builders, and media	Various	As needed	District Director, Project Staff, District Communication Manager(DCM)		Results are summarized to respective district, division, and department staff. Results are summarized to respective district, division, and department staff.	District, Division, Department, Public	NA	Used to formally document comments and concerns of the public
Qualitative	DTD	District - various	6-year program meeting	Public, local officials, media	Various	every 2 years	Planning manager, planning staff, district director, DCM		summarized to respective district, division, and department staff.	District, division, department	NA	Used to publicize 6-year program and solicit public comments
Quantitative	DTD	District - various	Customer satisfaction survey	Individuals and business acquired real estate from or relocated	Various	Every property owner acquire real estate from is surveyed following completion of acquisition	Districts send out the surveys which are returned to BHRE in Madison. Both districts and BHRE are involved in data analysis		Information is reported annually as part of the real estate performance indicators report	Reports are distributed to district staff, management, and b TD	Excel	Identify best practices and potential operational problems



TYPE	SPONSOR	Bureau	EFFORT	CUSTOMER GROUPS	ATTRIBUTES MEASURED	FREQUENCY	RESPONSIBILITY	METHOD	REPORT FORMAT AND FREQUENCY	REPORT DISTRIBUTION	ANALYTICAL SOFTWARE	DECISIONS
Qualitative	D TD	District - various	Citizens' Advisory Committees, Public Info. Mtgs local official mtg, public hearings	Members of public affected directly or indirectly by project	Various	As needed	Project manager assigned to project (various)	Meetings and hearings	Summarized within 2-3 weeks	District management	NA	Project and program decisions
Quantitative	D TTD	Highway Operations	Highway maintenance and traffic operations survey	WI residents	Satisfaction with and importance of various maintenance activities	1.5 years	Contractor - WRSL	Telephone survey	every 1.5 years, includes exec. Summary	All counties, district dir, planning chiefs, div. Admin, Secretary, states, libraries, OODS, OPA	SAS	Identify operational improvements, budget allocation decisions
Qualitative	D TIM/BOP	BOP	Focus groups	System users, EJ groups, general public	Various	upon initiation of system plan	Consultants under direction of BOP, BOP staff	focus group	written summary after focus group completed	BOP, DTIM mgmt, other divisions, internal & external advisory committee	NA	Development of preferred alternatives for system plans
Qualitative	D TIM/BOP	BOP	Corridor and statewide ITS studies	Local govt, interest groups, users, law enf, trucking co, transit advocates	Various	Once per corridor or statewide program plan iteration	District personnel, BOP ITS staff, consultants, working groups	study	grant and final formal reports, e-mail file distribution, CD's per the transportation project for which analysis was requested, formal report	DOT mgmt, FHWA, critical interest groups, all participants, posted on the web	Meta-manager, IDAS, traffic analysis software, excel	Recommending alternative strategies, priority listing, project justification, programs of projects
Qualitative	D TIM/BOP	BOP	Economic impact studies	Businesses, customers, local governments, faculty users	Various	upon expression of concern, by district request	Econ. Develop section, district staff, consultants, local govt, local businesses	Study		local govt, local businesses, econ develop section, districts, other requests	GIS, Excel	Selection of project alternatives, project justification
Qualitative	D TIM/BOP	BOP	Multi-model plan and system plan advisory committees	General public, interest groups, elected officials	Various	quarterly during plan development	BOP	meeting	Minutes of meetings	Committees, WisDOT staff, interested parties	Placed on web	Plan development
Qualitative	D TIM/BOP	BOP	special meetings (smart ways annual mtg, taking stock, plan kick-offs	interested parties	Various	annual or less	WisDOT staff, sponsoring agencies	meeting	summaries or proceedings to WisDOT staff and participants	Participants, WisDOT staff, identified interested parties	NA	General public support and interest, plan development
Qualitative	D TIM/BOP		Public meetings & hearings, web & phone reaction & input, other ways for public to comment on work products	General public, interest groups, elected officials	Various	upon plan draft and final draft release	BOP	Various	Summary workpaper, review in plan, upon request	BOP, requestors	NA	Plan development and amendment
Qualitative	D TIM/BOP		Public presentations	General public, interested parties, elected officials	Various	by invitation	Presenter	Presentation	Upon request, weekly for some things	BOP	Excel	Gauge public reaction and reviews

## **APPENDIX 1B – DETAILED DATA BY DIVISION/BUREAU**

NOTE: Findings and gaps identified in this section include issues that came to our attention during our fact-finding. Some of the issues raised are outside the scope of the mechanism this project is developing. However, we have included these observations in the hope that they will be useful to the Department.

### **General Findings for all DMV Bureaus:**

1. Customer satisfaction measurements from DMV are focused from the operational perspective with a major emphasis placed on timeliness. (i.e. wait times, backlogs, weeks to process).
2. All Bureaus utilize the Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) - which focuses on internal measures related to timeliness - for key decisions related to staffing, program changes, etc. This monthly index focuses on measuring processing times for key services/products of high volume in comparison to determined benchmarks. The benchmarks have been developed based on some customer input (comment cards, focus groups) and historical workload data. This measure is supplemented with a detailed workload statistical report.
3. Many of the areas within BVS and BDS have an indirect impact on customer service (BFS is the front line), however the customer has no idea that the actions of these functions impact them. Also, the indirect impacts of these areas on customer service are not formally measured.
4. The Division has begun development of a Customer Quality Index to measure other components of customer satisfaction (e.g. courtesy, accuracy). The system was briefly piloted but has not been fully implemented other than that BFS comment cards have been modified to reflect the new measures. Other components of the pilot included a survey of phone customers in BDS and BVS and an error count in BVS. It is intended to be a quarterly index. The measures at this point are based on what the team "thinks the customers expect". No direct customer expectation information has been gained.
5. It is important for this Division to have customers segmented by function (licensing, registration) and region of the state.
6. The Bureau of Field Services has the most customer contact and therefore, the largest amount of effort related to gaining direct customer feedback.

## **DMV – Field Services**

### Services:

- Driver License (primary product)
  - Original            Re-examination
  - Renewal           Reinstatement
  - ID Card            Occupational license (on-line anticipated in Aug)
  - Road Test          Commercial Driver's license
- Vehicle Registration
  - Title
  - Transfer of Title
  - Renewal of Registration
  - Reinstatement

General Public Customers: (4 million customers/yr, most in DOT)

- Drivers
- Vehicle Owners

### Segmented as follows:

1. Demographic (need to know)
  - Non-english speaking
  - Elderly population
  - Younger Driver
2. Regions – by county

### Other Customers:

- Motor carriers
- School bus drivers
- Commercial drivers
- Insurance Companies
- Courts
- Law enforcement
- Other state agencies

No differentiation between voluntary and involuntary.

### Primary Means of Contact:

- Face-to-face – over 4 million/yr (served through 105 service centers, 296 employees)
- Phone – 2 centralized phone centers = all calls at service centers will eventually be routed through these
  - Road test scheduling is handled through an automated touch tone phone service managed by these centers. This offers 24/7 access to scheduling and the ability to talk with an agent if the customer can not successfully schedule independently.

Current Feedback Methods/Surveys in Place:

<b>Tool</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Reviewed by</b>	<b>Report</b>
Comment Card (voluntary)  80,000/yr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timeliness</li> <li>• Service level (courtesy, etc.)</li> <li>• Office Efficiency</li> </ul>	Bureau Director, Division Administrator, District Managers  Weekly review	Summarized monthly at district level
Annual survey (random, distributed to every 10 <sup>th</sup> customer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timeliness</li> <li>• Courtesy</li> <li>• Availability of Service</li> </ul>	Same as above, plus supervisors  Annual review	Summarized annually in excel spreadsheet
Customer Satisfaction index	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timeliness</li> </ul>	Same as above  Monthly review	Summarized monthly at Bureau level
Complaint Tracking Logs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee level of service</li> </ul>	As needed	Ongoing log to ensure resolution

Used for operational and tactical decisions (such as staffing, hours, office locations, employee training, new programs, gaps in service).

Gaps:

- Information is only received if customer is willing – therefore tend to get high and low end of continuum (i.e. extremely pleased or very angry)
- CSI information is based on that which is easily measured and for which we “think” we understand the expectations – not 100% customer driven. Also, it is standards based – little done to ensure standards are still in line with customer expectations.
- Limited quality information (i.e. accuracy, appropriateness of process)

Incorporate:

- Quality information should be gained – need to look at accuracy, goal is to only on them come to us once if possible - key initiatives related to this
- Measure of professionalism of contact is important

General Findings:

- Some suggest that there is a direct correlation between reduction in resources and level of service – as the front door for DOT, level of service in BFS should be a priority.

## **DMV – Driver Services**

### Services:

- Driver Record Updates
  - Citations
  - Convictions
  - Withdrawals
  - Traffic Accident
- Phones (automated)
- Electronic Records (withdrawals, insurance)
- General Information/Response to Inquiries

### General Public Customers:

- Drivers

### Segmented by Function:

- Withdrawal
- Licensure
- Medical Record
- Traffic Accident

No need to segment geographically or demographically.

### Also (non-general public):

- Insurance companies
- Law enforcement
- Courts
- Medical professionals
- Other state agencies

### Means of Contact:

- Phone
- Written communication
- Through BFS staff

### Current Feedback Methods/Surveys in Place:

- CSI – primary means of determining service performance (expectations based on historical information, some customer input for customer group-related measures, that is asked the courts and insurance companies what was reasonable) - reviewed weekly.
- Considering process of monitoring calls (not implemented).

### Gaps:

- Quality measures – need to look at the content/quality of the service provided

### Incorporate:

- Correlation of satisfaction within DMV to other divisions given our “majority of the contacts position”. ROI should be reviewed.

### General Findings:

1. Services are not direct to and in some cases are not desired by the public, thus measuring satisfaction with service areas may not be appropriate. Managing to ensure indirect impacts on front line customers is minimized is current mode of operation.
2. High reliance on workload statistics-based measures for management decision making.

## **DMV – Vehicle Services**

### Services:

- Registration  
Renewals  
Titles  
Plates
- Emission Testing (800,000/year) – in selected areas of the state only

### General Public Customers:

- Vehicles Owners

### Also (non-general public):

- Motor Vehicle Carriers
- Car Dealers

### Means of Contact:

- Mail-in (majority)
- Phone (manage centralized phone centers in Madison and Milwaukee)
- Third-party contractors (mail-in and face-to-face)
- Indirect contact through BFS

### Segmentation by product type.

### Current Feedback Methods/Surveys in Place:

- CSI – measures timeliness of phone response, backlog of processing (e.g. lockbox, mail-in titles/plates)
- CQI – developed not implemented (survey of phone customers included)
- Emissions Testing – 3<sup>rd</sup> party comment cards
- Internet site – customer feedback/inquiry section

### Gaps:

- How to measure secondary impacts of lower levels of service on actual customer satisfaction? (i.e. if you can't get through to an agent on the phone, do you go down to the station? If we have skills tests backlogs are more people calling and complaining?)

### Incorporate:

- Accuracy measures have not been incorporated in the past due to the assumption that long tenured employees make few errors.

### General Findings:

1. The phone centers have in the past conducted a survey of customers, however this was a one-time project that has not been replicated.
2. Third party customers have a formal mechanism for providing feedback on service, however direct to the public customers do not.

## DSP – Field Services

## Support Services

### Services:

- Rural traffic enforcement (400,000 – 500,000 contacts/yr)
- Motorist Assistance (60,000/yr)
- Motor Carrier regulation
- Salvaged Vehicle
- Accident Reconstruction
- Public Safety/Education Services

Chemical Testing  
Recruitment

### General Public Customers:

- Motoring public  
In-state residents  
Out-of-state residents

Applicants

### Also (non-general public):

- Motor carriers
- School bus companies
- Farmers

Law enforcement  
Prosecutors  
Defense attorneys

Must be able to segment by region.

### Means of Contact:

- Face-to-face (majority)
- Phone – general inquires/complaints

Phone

### Current Feedback Methods/Surveys in Place:

- Complaint process is primary means of feedback (#'s tracked on annual basis)
- Compliment letters also used (voluntary)

Proposed: Racial profiling study – voluntary collection of data at point of contact

### Gaps:

- Currently do not have formal mechanism for assessing professionalism and courtesy of field staff from a customer perspective (i.e. rely on DSP supervisor observations)

### Incorporate:

- Measure of highway safety – what is important to customer? Is highway safety a concern?

### General Findings:

1. The majority of public customer contact is not voluntary or positive and is enforcement related. Therefore, the tool must measure whether the trooper performs in an acceptable/professional manner and must try to control for the negative perception associated with the contact itself (e.g. ticket)
2. Currently a passive approach to customer feedback is used; the sole method of feedback is a formal complaint or letter of compliment. Currently, only the total volume of these letters is tracked. (i.e. 51 letters this year)
3. An important aspect to measure is how the customers' awareness of public safety is really "learned". In other words, is it the Office of Transportation Safety campaign, the law enforcement action or the loss of license? (what is correlation between effort and outcome?)
4. The point of contact to gain customer feedback must be separated from the actual contact (i.e. don't ask us to hand out comment cards after issuing a ticket).

## **DTID – Transportation Safety**

### Services:

- Public safety campaigns
- Public safety announcements
- Press releases
- Funding for safety initiative through local or state units of government (joint projects)

### General Public Customers:

- All WI travelers (in and out of state users of the roads)  
(not just drivers, but passengers as well)

### Also (non-general public):

- Law enforcement
- Local units of government
- Courts/prosecutors
- Traffic safety advocates and advocate groups
- County traffic safety commissions

### Means of Contact:

- Media
- Phone – inquiries for safety information
- Face –to–face – presentations/seminars/mtgs.

### Current Feedback Methods/Surveys in Place:

None – public surveys were discontinued about five years ago due to the concern that asking about specific issues may elicit a desire for a service that can not be met within existing resources.

The general public will sometimes write letters to express concern about a safety issue or ask questions about a campaign.

Project feedback received as part of grant funding process as part of evaluation component, however this is from the grantee perspective and is not general public feedback about the program or level of service.

### Gaps:

- Need to be asking our customers how they feel about safety policy issues
- The general public should be determining how we spend our safety dollars – we don't currently know how they would prioritize resources

### Incorporate:

- Way to gain public perspective on policy decisions and gain feedback from them on effective strategies (e.g. Primary seat belt law – how do WI travelers feel about it, what would work to make it effective, how much would they be willing to pay to implement and evaluate the implementation?)



General Findings:

1. Two areas of insight: a) ensure that the mechanism asks for public input in setting priorities for policy and operations and b) don't assume that we at DOT know more than the public due to our "technical" expertise – if articulated appropriately they can tell us what is important to them.
2. It is important to decide where public input is appropriate – what do we want to know from them.
3. Products/Services of Transportation Safety are in many cases not direct to general public, but impacts of all efforts related directly to general public, therefore our resource decisions should be based on their priorities.

## Public Affairs

### Services:

- Public awareness campaigns
- Communication regarding construction projects
- External and internal communication systems

### General Public Customers:

- All DOT customers – focus tends to be on highway-related customers

### Also (non-general public):

- All DOT special interest groups
- Legislators
- Governor's Office

### Means of Contact:

- Media, phone, face-to-face, special presentations

### Current Feedback Methods/Surveys in Place:

- A global overriding feedback mechanism for the DOT public does not exist.

### Surveys are done on a project specific basis and have included:

- Feedback regarding Internet development
- The DTD Congestion Tolerance Survey
- The DTD Pavement Survey
- Significant amount of survey work performed in the Southeastern part of the state (e.g. road priorities w/ SEWRPAC)

### Gaps:

- Need to gather more information regarding communities issues relating to mobility issues
- Focus needs to be from a local perspective

### Incorporate:

- Measures relating to 1) responsiveness, quality and level of communication
- Need benchmarks for performance
- Do our methods of delivery make sense? Are they consistent? - need to develop consistent approaches to handling phone calls, transferring, etc.

### General Findings:

1. Limited resources for applications development – may wish to consider piggybacking onto Internet redesign project. Customer comments sections are currently available but not fully developed on the internet.
2. Shift in resources between Divisions may not be realistic, but the necessity to measure performance related to serving DOT customers exists and will be pushed politically if not done internally.

## **DTID – Aeronautics**

### Services:

- Airport Development – land use/planning, acquisition of property
- Compliance – registration of aircraft, certification of pilots
- Educational Courses - pilots  
High schools

### General Public Customers:

- Airport people  
Pilots
- Students
- Third party arrangement for airport development w/ county to gain public input

### Also (non-general public):

- Contractors
- Airport Commissions
- FAA
- Other State Agencies
  - Local units of government

### Means of Contact:

- Phone – key inquiries, inquiries related to project specifics, real estate transactions
- Face-to-face – real estate transactions, public presentations/educational programs

### Current Feedback Methods/Surveys in Place:

- No formal means for feedback from general public
- Public hearings administered by county occur for content specific feedback
- Website includes ability to e-mail feedback/comments directly to staff
- Critique forms used for educational sessions – summarized by excel spreadsheet

### Gaps:

- No formal process of feedback for our inquiry-based customers.- rely on relationships between customers and program managers

### Incorporate:

- Common tenets of good customer service should be measured
- Ensure consistency in how we “treat” our customers

### General Findings:

1. Due to the specialized nature of the work performed, contact with the general public is limited to a unique sub-public of “airport people”.
2. The majority of direct public interaction occurs through other agencies: DMV – registration of aircraft, county – public land use hearings, DNR – airport development issues).
3. Measures of success include: Communication of Airport Project Plans  
Success in Timely Implementation of Project Plans
4. Variety of products and uniqueness of customer makes it unrealistic to manage customers at a global level within DOT.
5. Only time customers view us as DOT is when they feel they have been treated unfairly or poorly. (e.g. our airport customers will let us know if they had a difficult time in the DMV line).

## **DTID – Rails and Harbors**

### Services:

#### Rails

- Overall preservation of rail system
- Working w/ railway companies for access/easements and modifications related to road construction  
(land use planning done by DTID, rail signage done by Railroad commissioner office)

#### Harbors

- Funding for commercial harbor improvement
- Education related to Water Transportation (primarily commercial)

### General Public Customers:

#### Rails

- None (all public contact through Office of Commissioner of Railroad)

#### Harbors

- Environmental Groups/citizens with environmental interest

### Also (non-general public):

#### Rails

- Local units of government
- Railway management
- Other DOT staff
- Associations

#### Harbors

- Local units of government (they also act as a third party to handle all public hearings, no oversight or regulatory monitoring is performed by DOT)
- DNR
- State and federal agencies for joint bodies of water

### Means of Contact:

- Primary public contact is handled by local units of government and is coordinated on a regional basis for major water use planning.
- Contact from environmental interests is primarily through letter to DOT Secretary.

### Current Feedback Methods/Surveys in Place:

None – have tried to include us in DTID survey in past and we don't fit because we don't serve the public.

### Gaps:

- N/A

### Incorporate:

- N/A

### General Findings:

- Other local units of government or state agencies act as the primary contact for rails and harbors issues.
- It may be useful to see if customers understand that distinction. (i.e. do they think it is DOT, because DOT is involved in the project?)
- Assessment of referrals to the appropriate source may be appropriate.

## **Division of Business Management**

### Services:

- Internal support to DOT business units
- Human Resources
- Financial Systems
- Budgeting
- IT

### General Public Customers:

- Applicants for vacant DOT positions

### Also (non-general public):

- DOT managers/supervisors
- Employees
- Contractors

### Means of Contact:

- Face-to face
- E-mail
- Phone

### Current Feedback Methods/Surveys in Place:

- Employee survey
- Recruitment process feedback for dept managers

No formal public feedback mechanisms

### Gaps:

- How do DOT customers perceive the importance of mobility in comparison to other DOT services (DMV, DSP, Aeronautics)

### Incorporate:

- Nothing related to general public
- Method as described in survey design section for use in managing dept resources

### General Findings:

1. Need to create buy-in to performance measurement process and to educate managers as to how customer input should be incorporated into that process
2. Interest groups in reality influence many resource decisions – need objective data from department-wide perspective.
3. Past effort to gain department-wide information on employee satisfaction was shared, but not acted on from a department-wide perspective.

## **DTD**

### Services:

- Plan, design, improve/upgrade and maintain facilities
- Facilities include highways, airports, ports, waysides, rest areas

### General Public Customers:

- Traveling public
- Tourists
- Property owners

### Also (non-general public):

- Other units of government
- Industry
- Businesses
- Environment groups

### Means of Contact:

- Informational meetings (person to person)
- Mailing lists/newsletters
- Media – press releases
- Website
- Also phone contact (responding to questions)
- Also feedback through legislators and local government representatives

Input tends to be received from interest groups, property or business owners directly affected by a project, or legislators. Do not get as much input from the general traveling public.

### Current Surveys in Place:

- Use Highway Maintenance Survey (conducted by Highway ops) see annual roll up – balance results with technical knowledge and use for help in decisions about signage or way sides
- Use real estate survey of property owners to manage staff and manage how the process is working

### Gaps:

- Narrow base of feedback on projects – usually only get feedback from people directly affected, not enough general public input. Some feel projects are similar enough to do a broad survey that is not project specific and still get useful feedback.
- Do not have information about customer preferences regarding possible trade-offs – resource allocation is approached in stove pipes

### Incorporate/Consideration for Department Wide Mechanism:

- Public values – time, money, safety, convenience
- Possibly look at investment by modes
- Access
- Evaluate extent to which customer needs are met when they interact with DOT (how well do we do what we do, do we do things right the first time etc)

General Findings:

- Community sensitive design process is being implemented and should enhance public input and influence on projects
- Compass program is being implemented to evaluate service levels/maintenance for various segments of highways
- There is a feeling that DOT is 'silently efficient' and needs to educate the public regarding the outcomes of the Department's efforts
- There is some interest in obtaining data about how the public would like to interact – what is the best way to disseminate information to the public

## **DTID – Bureau of Highway Development**

### Services:

- State Highway Map
- State Truck Highway map book
- Access management issues (driveways, streets etc)
- Also w/ non GP customers
  - Geodetic information
  - Aerial photography
  - Cartographic services
  - Standards for highway design projects (Facilities development manual)
  - Engineering services to review plans, interpret FDM

### General Public Customers:

- Tourists
- Traveling public
- Property owners

### Also (non-general public):

- Other units of government
- Internal customers within DOT
- Industry
- Businesses
- Environment groups

### Means of Contact:

- phone contact (responding to questions, requests, or rerouting to other divisions)
- Also feedback through legislators and local government representatives
- Rely on Transportation Districts as a link to the general public
- Legislature as a link to the general public

### Customer Attributes Identified:

- Safety
- Mobility
- Aesthetics/community values

### Current Surveys in Place:

- None in division
- Sometimes see BHO survey (10 yrs ago re: rest area, way sides, access)

### Gaps:

- May not hear about other surveys going on in other divisions

### Incorporate/Considerations for Department Wide Mechanism:

- Department is diverse – how measure all?
- General public may not be aware of services other than DMV provided by the Department
- Would like to know is customer getting his money's worth – return

### General Findings:

- Districts are the link between Bureau and the general public customers – Bureau relies on districts to be the 'eyes and ears' of the public



## **DTID – Bureau of Environment**

Services (no direct general public interaction):

- Environmental services
  - Includes services related to state and federal environmental laws
  - Facilities Development Manual – provide input to put environmental rules into effect, provide training on new rules
  - Technical assistance and special project involvement with Transportation Districts
- Policy analysis
  - For example, air quality policy and involvement in addressing non-attainment for ozone levels
  - Work with districts on projects that may have an air quality impact

Direct General Public Customers:

- No direct general public customers (although public at large is served by environmental services)

Means of Contact:

- Involvement with general public would come through districts
- Do have involvement with stakeholders

Current Surveys in Place:

- NA

Gaps:

- As a whole, department does not survey customers enough
- Do not have a sense for what support is there for specific improvements
- Do not know what broad public priorities are – overall what does the public want
- Do not have data for determining how we are doing – making a case

Incorporate/Considerations for Department Wide Mechanism:

- Need to define who are the customers (many customers/partners/stakeholders with different points of view).

General Findings:

- Not clear whether the general public is aware of DOT Environmental Services
- Bureau is working with ASHTO Center for Environmental Excellence to develop performance standards (not customer satisfaction focused)

## **DTID – Bureau of Highway Construction**

### Services:

- Highway bidding – Bureau manages the highway construction bidding process, including establishing standards for the process as well as project lettings
- Technical assistance on contracts to internal customers (district administrators) - help the districts put together contracts that make sense
- Conducts materials testing

### Direct General Public Customers:

- Bureau has second tier effect on general public – results indirectly impact the general public

### Other Customers:

- Contractors
- Districts
- Consulting engineers
- Legislature
- Industry representatives

### Means of Contact:

- Legislators
- Input from districts

### Current Surveys in Place:

- Division has no customer satisfaction measures
- Some reliance on professional organizations – general studies of customer perceptions/priorities
- Have technical ratings of pavement quality (have pavement labs which gather data and provide to districts to plant improvement projects)

### Gaps:

- Bureau relies on districts for customer information (they have the contact) – communication could be improved
- Traffic congestion in construction projects – what do people want vis-à-vis a longer project with less detour or a shorter timeframe with more detour

### Incorporate/Considerations for Department Wide Mechanism:

- Traffic congestion – what do people want – level of tolerance of congestion in a construction projects
- Communicate affects of projects (share information with the public)
- Must be careful to ensure that technical components/professional decisions don't get lost
- Distribution of VK report would be helpful

### General Findings:

- Some general satisfaction data comes from national organizations (research by groups such as ASHTO)
- Communication between districts and Bureau is key – there is no formal mechanism for districts to report what they find to the Bureau

## DTID – Real Estate

### Services:

- Bureau sets policy, training
- Districts work with property owners to acquire real estate, relocate residents and business

### General Public Customers:

- By region

### Means of Contact:

- Direct – in-person with property owners
- Also mail and phone correspondence as needed

### Customer Attributes Identified:

- Professionalism (did they know their stuff)
- Accuracy (was the value appropriate)
- Timeliness

### Current Feedback Methods/Surveys in Place:

Tool	Measures	Reviewed by	Report
Survey of property owners (all property owners whose property has been acquired)	Satisfaction with knowledge, courtesy, responsiveness	Bureau of Real Estate, Transportation District Directors, Real Estate Supervisors	Summarized annually, individual results to districts

- Survey results are used to improve the process, identify training needs, evaluate staff performance

### Gaps:

- Public does not understand what the process is or why (would satisfaction increase with more education – could we sell ourselves better)
- Need feedback earlier in the process
- Do not have information about what's important to the public (in general terms)

### General Findings

- Customer satisfaction may be harmed when not enough information is disseminated (for example, when property owners do not get information about overall project timelines, that will affect their satisfaction)

## **DTIM – Bureau of State Highway Programs**

### Services:

- Collect highway related data
- Complete traffic forecasts
- Program development
- Program financing

### General Public Customers:

- NA – all indirect

### Other Customers:

- Bureau of Planning using data produced in the development of statewide plan
- Bureau of Local Roads and Transit is a customer of the Bureau

### Means of Contact:

- General public contact occurs at the district level

### Current Surveys in Place:

- NA

### Gaps:

- NA

### Incorporate/Consideration for Department Wide Mechanism:

- Results should not be interpreted in a vacuum – need to integrate other factors (such as technical knowledge) into decision making
- Concern about grading one area over another

### General Findings

- Fail to educate public and provide information about what we're doing and why

## **DTIM – Bureau of Planning**

### Services:

- Statewide long range plan
- Policy and economic analysis

### General Public Customers:

- Indirectly – general public is customer for long range plan
- Often focus on environmental justice and look to ensure no disproportional impact on one group (elderly, disabled etc)

### Means of Contact:

- Focus groups – targeted for an issue
- Information sessions
- Public hearings

Primary mechanisms are qualitative, not quantitative.

### Customer Attributes Identified:

- How well does the public feel it's being served - are we meeting you needs
- User preferences (travel time, safety, quality of ride)
- Fiscal component – what will you spend (conjoint)
- Future need – what do you see the system providing
- What are the issues DOT should be looking at

### Current Surveys in Place:

- Nothing quantitative – all qualitative

### Gaps:

- Rely on meetings and focus groups – no statistically valid measure –would be useful to have quantitative information

### Incorporate/Consideration for Department Wide Mechanism:

- Need to educate first
- Must place user preferences in context of trade-offs - possibly use conjoint analysis (for example, how people respond to questions about using transit depends on how often it is available, how much it costs etc – also, often people like the idea of a choice regardless of whether they are going to use it)
- Bureau of planning would like to tie it to the planning process
- Must have a process to identify trade-offs and context for decisions within the survey
- Look for results to help in decisions regarding level of service (where is threshold for congestion)
- Should no include simple questions like do you like the transportation system

## **DTIM – Bureau of Highway Operations**

### Services:

- Sets policies and standards (and evaluates new techniques and technology) for
  - Maintenance
  - snow plowing
  - signs
  - traffic regulations

### General Public Customers:

- Indirectly – general public is served by policies
- Internal customers are the districts – there is no measure in place to determine whether the Bureau is serving and meeting the needs of its internal customers

### Means of Contact:

- Bureau does not have direct contact – contact is at districts

### Customer Segments:

- Demographic (old v. young)
- Urban vs. rural
- High mileage drivers

### Customer Attributes:

- For current survey – measure satisfaction on 16 attributes and ask about the importance of each attribute to the public

### Current Feedback Methods/Surveys in Place:

<b>Tool</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Reviewed by</b>	<b>Report</b>
Highway maintenance survey	Satisfaction with and importance of various maintenance activities	Bureau of Highway operations, Transportation Districts	Provides data overall and by district

Highway maintenance survey has in the past been used to help make resource decisions (for example, can we reallocate resources for rest areas)

- Internal survey of state patrol officers re: winter operations

### Gaps:

- Internal customers (not enough focus on internal customers being served throughout the department)
- Education
- Current highway maintenance survey is not a strong decision making tool and is being revamped

### Incorporate/Consideration for Department Wide Mechanism:

- Who are we being responsive to – tourists are important
- Expectations may change with trip purpose or depending on when people are asked (seasonal difference in what's important)
- Should consider final mechanism as a focus group – due to education needs

### General Findings:

- Highway maintenance survey is currently under revision

*Research Report*

**Wisconsin Department of  
Transportation Department-Wide  
Customer Satisfaction Mechanism  
Phase 3**

Prepared by  
Chamberlain Research Consultants, Inc.  
September, 2002

Prepared for



**Wisconsin Department of Transportation**

**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
DEPARTMENT-WIDE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION  
MECHANISM**

**PHASE 3**



## Introduction and Methodology

### Background

In December 2001, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) selected VirchowKrause & Company (VK) and Chamberlain Research Consultants, Inc. (CRC) to develop a mechanism to measure the general public's satisfaction with DOT's products and services. In May 2002, VK delivered a report that outlined results from Phase 1 (Profile and Plan) and Phase 2 (Best Practices Research). This Phase 3 report outlines the results of steps in which we developed a set of customer satisfaction measures and tested the mechanism. The purpose of developing one survey to assess satisfaction is to provide a consistent way of measuring and making comparisons of customer satisfaction data across DOT divisions that interact with the general public. In this document, we also propose a framework for future data analysis.

### Customer Segments

In Phase 1 of the project, VK recommended, and the Technical Oversight Committee agreed to, a model of segmenting DOT customers by aligning them with products and services within various divisions and bureaus of the DOT. The benefit of this model is that it identifies only those products and services with direct public impact. Thus, our approach follows this recommendation and identifies the following three segments of customers:

- ◆ **Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) customers:** customers who interact with the DMV in any way (on-line, telephone, in-person) for the purpose of renewing a license, getting a new driver's license, reinstating a license, renewing vehicle registration, or registering or titling a vehicle
- ◆ **Wisconsin State Patrol customers:** individuals who have received roadside assistance from the Wisconsin State Patrol and people who have received traffic citations from a state trooper
- ◆ **Transportation District customers:** the traveling public who encounter road construction on Wisconsin state highways or property owners who have had their property affected by construction or expansion of a state highway or interstate

Thus, the purpose of this report is to show how we used this segmentation model to create and pilot test a customer satisfaction survey that is useful across divisions of DOT.

### Scope of Phase 3

The scope of Phase 3, as determined by the DOT, was to develop a set of customer satisfaction measures and data-collection mechanisms, along with the identification of an analysis framework, that would complement or expand the effectiveness of DOT's existing efforts. As determined in Phase 2, the customer satisfaction measure will focus only on the divisions of DOT that have direct interaction with the general public; thus, the measure does not address all customers who have interaction with the DOT. The deliverables for this phase include a pilot-tested data-collection mechanism and a data analysis and reporting plan.

Although the original project scope also specified recommendations on survey administration software and data analysis software that DOT would need to implement the recommended mechanism, this scope was revised somewhat. Because of the magnitude of conducting a large scale customer satisfaction survey, DOT will likely outsource the survey administration portion of this project, which makes an analysis of survey administration software unnecessary. Further, information regarding cost and

software capabilities was not available from software vendors which kept us from making a recommendation. Thus, DOT, VK, and CRC jointly decided to present a high-level overview comparing options for completing data analysis internally with its current computer system (SAS), or with another data analysis software program. Options are therefore presented with pros and cons rather than as recommendations.

## **Executive Summary**

### **Developing the customer satisfaction mechanism**

The first step in creating a customer satisfaction measure is identifying the factors or components of customer satisfaction. To identify these factors for DOT, Chamberlain Research Consultants (CRC) conducted focus groups with DOT customers who have had contact with each of the three customer segments identified in Phase 2: DMV customers, state patrol customers, and transportation district customers. Using the information collected in the focus groups, CRC developed a quantitative tool for measuring customer satisfaction across the customer-focused divisions of DOT. Thus, the resulting mechanism was created based on criteria identified by actual DOT customers (the survey is included in the report appendix).

To this end, a single customer satisfaction mechanism was developed to collect customer satisfaction data. The advantage of using one instrument is that it offers a consistent way of collecting and analyzing data across the departments. First, all customers answer general questions about DOT divisions and then are routed to one section of the questionnaire to answer questions about a specific encounter with one of the following transaction types:

- Contact with DMV in person
- Contact with DMV by phone, mail, or on-line
- Encountering state highway construction or maintenance while driving
- Receiving motorist assistance by the State Patrol
- Being stopped by the State Patrol for a traffic violation
- Owning property or residing in a community affected by state highway construction

For each customer segment, participants first rate how important the relevant factors of satisfaction are to them and then rate their satisfaction with each factor during a recent encounter.

### **Testing the customer satisfaction mechanism**

CRC conducted a telephone survey with 300 randomly selected Wisconsin residents to pilot test the customer satisfaction mechanism. We used a random digit dial (RDD) list because targeted lists with names and phone numbers were not available from DOT. Further, an RDD sample allowed us to gauge the incidence of each transaction type. In fact, we found that people who received motorist assistance and property owners of land affected by state highway construction had a very low incidence in the population.

### **Recommendations for conducting a large-scale customer satisfaction study**

The customer satisfaction mechanism performed extremely well in the pilot test and is recommended for use in a large-scale on-going customer satisfaction initiative. However, although recruiting participants from an RDD list was sufficient for the pilot study, it is not the most efficient way to recruit participants for a large on-going customer satisfaction study and would be the most expensive way to collect these data. Thus, we suggest a different sampling strategy and sample size for the large on-going study. The following are our recommendations for conducting this research:

- To collect the most unbiased, accurate data possible, telephone interviews should be used to conduct a large, on-going study
- To make data collection as timely, efficient, and inexpensive as possible, each of the divisions identified through customer segmentation should provide targeted lists of customers with names and phone numbers
  - If targeted customer lists of people who have received motorist assistance from the State Patrol are not available, we do not feel that the benefit outweighs the cost of data collection and recommend dropping this section from the survey
- To achieve a desirable margin of error ( $\pm 5\%$ ), 380 people from each transaction type must complete the survey (this equates to 2,280 respondents assuming that DOT can provide targeted lists for each segment)
- Ideally, results from the research will be reported on a quarterly basis; reporting on a quarterly basis will allow comparisons among seasons using a statistically reliable sample (this equates to 2,280 surveys conducted per quarter or 9,120 annually)
- To accommodate a smaller budget, results could be compiled twice per year (4,560 surveys annually) or once per year (2,280 surveys annually). Although these options will still provide useful information, comparisons between seasons will be limited because of a larger margin of error
- Regardless of the frequency of data reporting, data should be collected on a monthly basis to avoid seasonal biases
- Annual reporting should be scheduled to allow enough time for DOT to use the information while preparing for its biennial budget submittal which occurs in September
- Questions answered by all respondents that assess overall satisfaction with each department (G1, G2, G3, and G4) should be added to all DOT customer satisfaction surveys to gauge the overall impression of these divisions; results from these questions will be used as a broad barometer of satisfaction that indicates the need for further questions rather than as a call for specific action
- The highway maintenance and traffic operations survey is a proactive, statistical survey currently conducted by the Bureau of Highway Operations. It is therefore recommended that the overarching satisfaction questions (G1-G4) be added to that survey, and the data from those questions analyzed along with the results of the larger Customer Satisfaction survey. Through this process, the department can ensure that it capitalizes on research already being done. Prior to integrating the data, however, consideration should be given to ensuring that sample size, timing of the surveys, and frequency of data collection are comparable.

### **Analyzing customer satisfaction data**

The survey was designed to provide strategic decision making information to the department that is not currently available, such as:

- How satisfied are general public customers with the service they receive from various divisions and how does this change over time (are we doing things right?)
- What aspects of services are important to customers and how satisfied are customers with the aspects they consider most important (are we doing things right? Are we doing the right things?)

- What is the overall level of customer satisfaction with the department, and which services have the greatest influence on overall satisfaction (are we doing things right? Are we doing the right things?)

There are three common strategies used for analyzing customer satisfaction data: gap analysis, regression analysis, and factor analysis. Each analysis can be used, depending on the goals of the division. The following are options for analyzing data and examples of each; these examples come from data collected in the pilot study from the largest subgroup, DMV in person. Because of the small sample size used in these analyses, data should be viewed as preliminary only and should not be used for making definitive decisions or conclusions.

- **Gap analysis**, as displayed on the graph below, indicates where satisfaction lags behind importance and where satisfaction exceeds the importance on each attribute

- **Regression analysis** is used to identify drivers of satisfaction. For example, the graph below depicts the relationship that all satisfaction attributes have in regards to overall satisfaction for visiting the DMV in person. These data suggest that if the DMV could do one thing to improve overall satisfaction, they should reduce the amount of time customers wait in line before reaching the counter. Note that because of the small sample size, these data should purely be for illustration purposes rather than to make definitive conclusions or decisions.

- **Factor analysis** can be used to identify underlying components of satisfaction, or categorize data into manageable information units. For example, components of satisfaction with visiting the DMV in person, such as respect, friendly, accuracy, and knowledgeable may be reduced to a common underlying factor called customer service. Again, this example is used purely for illustration purposes and should not be used to make definitive budgetary or business decisions.

#### **Estimated first year costs**

If DOT hired a vendor to collect and analyze the data as recommended, the cost to complete 2,280 surveys (380 per transaction type) using targeted lists provided by DOT is estimated at approximately \$65,000 to \$75,000. If results are reported quarterly, as recommended, the annual total may cost approximately between \$260,000 and \$300,000.

If targeted lists from DOT are not available, the cost to complete 1,900 surveys (eliminating the motorist assistance section from the survey) using an RDD list may be approximately between \$160,000 and \$170,000 per reporting period. This translates to approximately \$640,000 to \$680,000 per year, with analyses conducted on a quarterly basis.

The cost of the survey will depend on a number of factors, including availability of targeted lists, sample size, and frequency of data collection. Accordingly, it is anticipated that the Department's selected vendor should be able to work with DOT to create a solution that can meet its goals while accommodating the Department's budget.

**Section I:**  
**Customer Satisfaction Measures,**  
**Data Collection Mechanisms,**  
**and Analysis Framework**



### **Identifying Factors That Influence Customer Satisfaction: Focus Groups**

After identifying the relevant customer segments, we wanted to find out more about the issues that face DOT customers and define the factors that influence a customer to be satisfied with a service. Thus, we conducted focus groups to gain an understanding of how our customers viewed issues (See Section II).

#### *Purpose and methodology*

As part of a large study conducted for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation by Virchow Krause & Company, subcontractor Chamberlain Research Consultants, Inc. conducted four focus groups with state residents to assess their criteria for satisfaction with DOT. This focus group report is submitted in partial fulfillment of Phase 3 of this study.

Participants were recruited by CRC telephone interviewers from a list of licensed drivers supplied by DOT. They were screened to have had at least one of the following types of interaction with DOT in the last six months: vehicle title or registration, driver's licensing, motorist assistance, traffic enforcement, property owner affected by state highway construction, or driving through state highway construction.

Two groups were composed of people who lived in rural areas and two groups were composed of people from urban and suburban areas. A total of 50 people participated, including one person who was unable to participate in the Appleton rural group and who was interviewed later by telephone. The groups were held July 8-10, 2002 in Appleton, Madison, and Milwaukee. Participants were paid a \$50 cash honorarium as a thank-you for attending. Each group was moderated by an experienced CRC moderator, either Sharon Chamberlain, CRC President, or Tyler Walker, CRC Director of Field Research.

This qualitative study was conducted to guide development of a quantitative customer satisfaction survey instrument, as part of Phase 3. Focus group findings are not statistically representative or projectable to the larger population.

#### *Incidence of DOT interaction*

In recruiting the focus groups, CRC worked from lists of licensed drivers. DOT was unable to provide lists of drivers who met the various requirements. As expected, it was easiest to find drivers who had recently visited the DMV or driven in road construction. It was hardest to find individuals who had been stopped or assisted by the State Patrol or who owned property affected by state road construction. For the purposes of tracking customer satisfaction with DOT services, it will be helpful for divisions to maintain transaction records in a format that can be used by survey managers without violating drivers' privacy.

### **Designing the Customer Satisfaction Survey**

Using information collected from the focus groups, CRC developed a quantitative tool for measuring customer satisfaction across customer-focused divisions of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Thus, the measures on this survey reflect the factors of satisfaction identified by DOT customers. CRC then conducted a pilot test of this instrument. This section of the report outlines the process of creating the survey instrument and the logistical choices made in pilot testing it, such as data collection methodology, sample frame, and sample size. This section also includes recommendations for a large-scale ongoing customer satisfaction tracking study, incorporating lessons learned from the pilot test, and offers a scaled-down alternative for a smaller budget.

#### *Format of survey instrument*

In order to collect information in a consistent way about customer satisfaction with all DOT's customer-focused divisions, CRC developed a single survey instrument to be used for the statewide survey (see Appendix A). Although, to date, different divisions have assessed customer satisfaction using a variety of tools and methods, there has never been one standard measure that assessed satisfaction with DOT's customer-focused divisions. The advantage of using one standard measure is that the data collection process will be the same for each division; this makes it possible to make comparisons between customer-focused divisions. Further, the mere act of conducting customer satisfaction research with the general public is good public relations for DOT; thus, one standard customer satisfaction measure shows that DOT's divisions are working together in this initiative. Randomly selected respondents would be asked a series of questions about their experiences with DOT within the last six months. Based on the initial goals set out for this study, and enhanced by the focus group findings, the following types of interaction were identified as being of primary interest to DOT:

- ◆ Contact with the DMV in person (survey section A)
- ◆ Contact with the DMV by phone, mail or on-line (survey section B)
- ◆ Encountering state highway construction or maintenance while driving (survey section C)
- ◆ Being provided with motorist assistance by the State Patrol (survey section D)
- ◆ Being stopped by the State Patrol for a traffic violation (survey section E)
- ◆ Owning property or residing in a community affected by state highway construction (survey section F)

The survey was designed to identify respondents who had any of these experiences in the last six months and then to query them about only one of the experiences. In this way, a rough measure of the incidence of each type of interaction would be obtained without unduly burdening individuals who had experienced more than one type of interaction with a long survey interview.

For the pilot test (see Section III), a priority system was established to determine which of multiple survey topics an individual should address. The six transaction types were ranked in order of expected incidence, and individuals were asked the questions regarding the interaction type that we expected to be rarest in the population (the priority quota instructions are included with the survey instrument in the attachments to this report.).

#### **For the large-scale ongoing study, we recommend setting quotas for each of the six transaction types and using customer lists supplied by the DOT divisions.**

This will ensure that the sample size for each transaction type is large enough to be statistically reliable. (See Sampling Frame section below for further discussion.)

In response to the DOT's goal of finding out whether customers feel DOT is both "doing the right thing" and "doing it right," the survey includes "gap analysis" questions and "forced-choice" questions. In each of the six sections (sections A-F on the survey instrument), respondents were first asked to rate the importance of various components of the interaction and were then asked to rate their satisfaction with these components based on their own recent experience. The purpose of this structure was to develop a gap analysis comparing what customers feel is important against how well DOT performs. In each section, respondents were also asked a forced-choice question in which they were required to prioritize two major service goals.

The subjects of the forced-choice questions and the attributes on which the DOT was rated were developed from the focus group findings. The criteria for a satisfactory experience were of course different for each type of transaction, and some sections presented as few as three attributes, while others asked respondents to rate as many as thirteen.

For all six sections, questions were worded as similarly as possible, and rating scales were consistent. CRC chose a 10-point scale because it is large enough to detect subtle differences and changes over time and because an even-numbered scale forces fence-sitting respondents to choose a rating in either the top or bottom half, rather than picking a middle number (like 3 on a 5-point scale).

Because the question structure is the same for all divisions, even though the subject matter is specific to each division, the survey can be used to make comparisons across divisions of the DOT. Organizations involved in formal Quality Improvement processes set goals for customer satisfaction, so that, for example, a division's goal in a certain year might be to improve customer satisfaction rating by a certain percentage. DOT can incorporate the survey rating scale when setting performance goals.

In addition to the six separate transaction-based sections (each respondent only answered one section), there were some questions that all respondents answered, including the overall impression of DOT divisions (G1, G2, G3, and G4 on the survey in Appendix A). **For consistency purposes, we recommend that these rating questions be added to all customer satisfaction surveys administered by individual departments or divisions of DOT.** These general questions will act as a broad gauge of how divisions are doing rather than a specific call for action. Results from these questions can be tabulated and compared to the same questions on the customer satisfaction measure proposed in this project; however, it should be noted that the samples may differ and results should be interpreted with this caution.

We found the survey instrument worked very well in the pilot test, with unambiguous wording and logical skip patterns, and we do not recommend any major changes for use in a large-scale study. There is only one question which we feel needs revision: Question G5-a asked certain respondents to identify the states they feel have better roads than Wisconsin. Because of the way respondents were selected to answer this question, the data does not provide a useful comparison, and the question should be reworked. Details and suggestions are provided in the Pilot Report in Section III.

#### *Data collection methodology*

Based on research from Phase 1 and Phase 2, CRC and VK determined that the best way to conduct a department-wide, statewide survey was to use a single instrument for all types of customers. CRC considered various methods of data collection, and telephone was chosen for five reasons:

1. Telephone allows random access to households all over the state. Long gone are the days of the famous “Dewey Defeats Truman” headline, used in every opinion research textbook as an example of a faulty sampling frame. Back then, only rich people had telephones, and a telephone survey provided one newspaper’s election pollsters with disastrously misleading results. But now, virtually all households have phones, and a random digit dial (RDD) list enables us to reach even unlisted and new numbers. There is a small inherent bias: people living in institutions such as nursing

homes and prisons may not have phones, people with hearing or speech disorders may not be available for interviews, and non-English speakers can require a special approach. But for the purposes of this survey, telephone is the best way to ensure a reliable, random, representative sample of the DOT customer base. The modern equivalent of the Dewey fiasco would be conducting a survey of the general population on-line, since only half of American households have Internet access. An on-line survey would be an excellent way to survey visitors to various DOT Web sites, but that was not the scope of this study. Virtually all Web site visitors will be able to respond to a phone survey.

2. Quotas can be set to ensure adequate response for less-common transaction types. A mail survey sent to a random sample of DOT customers might yield only a few responses from drivers who had received motorist assistance (in the random digit dial pilot test, the incidence was only 1%). By setting quotas, as CRC recommends for the large-scale ongoing study, interviewers will keep calling until they've reached enough respondents for every section of the survey, even the hard-to-find ones. Using named lists, particularly for drivers receiving motorist assistance and property owners affected by state road construction, will keep down the cost of filling these quotas.
3. Telephone surveys have the least self-selection bias of any option. Any survey that relies on the respondent's motivation to reply runs the risk of skewing data toward people with strong opinions, who may not be typical of the whole population. Phone survey respondents are randomly selected, so members who have less to say are interviewed, while they might not have bothered to fill out a survey they picked up at the DMV office or received by mail or e-mail. People with poor reading or writing ability will be better represented. Quotas can be set to represent the known profile of the response base. Sample size is guaranteed—interviewers keep calling until they get the required number of responses. Thus, the margin of error is set at an acceptable number in advance, without gambling on response rates (which can be as low as 2% in a mail survey).

On-site surveys, though they seem to be a good way to reach everyone who experiences a certain type of transaction, have important sampling drawbacks. First of all, though many DMV transactions are conducted on site, the rest of the transaction types this survey addresses would not be appropriate for on-site distribution: it would be awkward for state troopers or property evaluators to conduct a survey or hand out a card at the end of a traffic stop or compensation negotiation. Even when a study is directed at visitors to a location, there is still a sampling bias. If the survey instrument is simply handed out or left on a counter to be picked up, the selection bias is the same as any mail survey: the people who respond are not necessarily representative of everyone who had the opportunity. Even if the survey is administered by an interviewer (a very expensive option), people may decline to respond if they are in a hurry, caring for unruly children, feeling ill, or accompanied by other people. A phone survey can always be rescheduled for a time the respondent finds convenient.

4. The data quality is very high in a phone survey because well-trained interviewers require respondents to conform to the survey structure and they record responses accurately. Self-administered paper surveys often are returned with incomplete data: skipped questions, illegible answers, comments instead of numerical ratings, etc. If respondents do not understand a question, they may answer inappropriately or not at

all. An experienced research designer will keep this in mind while drafting self-administered surveys and try to minimize potential problems, but interviewer-administered surveys will still yield more accurate data.

5. With a phone survey, the duration of data collection periods can be tightly controlled to allow accurate comparison over time and from season to season. The large-scale ongoing survey will seek to track customer satisfaction over time, particularly at different times of year (during winter and road construction) and after policy changes have been implemented. Phone surveys can be in and out of the field on precise dates, and data is tabulated immediately. Some other data collection methods cannot be controlled as precisely.

In the pilot test, telephone surveys proved to be an excellent data collection method; thus, **to collect the most unbiased, accurate data possible, we recommend using telephone interviews for the large-scale ongoing study.**

#### *Sampling frame*

Although we recommend that the survey instrument and the data collection method should be the same in the future as they were for the pilot test, we suggest a different sampling frame and sample size for the large-scale ongoing study.

For the pilot test of the survey instrument, CRC used a random digit dial list (RDD) of Wisconsin households, and interviewers asked screening questions to identify adults (not necessarily licensed drivers) who had recently had one or more of the specified types of interaction with DOT.

An RDD list is a randomly generated list of phone numbers for working residential exchanges throughout the state. In addition to listed phone numbers, these lists also include unlisted and new phone numbers. CRC purchased the list from a list supply house with which we have a long-standing business relationship.

We used an RDD list because targeted lists with names and phone numbers were not available from the DOT for all segments. Further, an RDD sample allowed us to get a rough measurement of the incidence of each transaction types. We did not restrict the study to licensed drivers to allow into the study property owners and community members who might be affected by highway construction despite not being licensed drivers.

For the large-scale ongoing survey, **we recommend that as part of the Department's commitment to customer satisfaction research, the customer-focused divisions should find a way to provide lists of recent transactions.** (We refer to these as "targeted" lists).

- ◆ DMV should supply lists of recent driver's license and vehicle renewals and other contacts (including transactions in person, on-line and by mail, not necessarily identified by method). This will be used to fill the quotas for survey sections A and B, and also for section C, drivers encountering road construction.
- ◆ State Patrol should supply lists identifying drivers recently assisted in an emergency or stopped for violations (survey sections D and E). This could include non-licensed drivers if the offense included driving without a license. Obtaining these lists will make a dramatic difference in the cost of interviewing.

In the pilot test, these two populations were respectively 1% and 7% of the total respondent base, and reaching an adequate sample using RDD lists instead of named lists would require a significantly larger investment in interviewing labor (a discussion comparison of these costs are presented at the end of Section I).

- ◆ The transportation districts should assist in developing targeted RDD lists for the section of the survey applying to community residents affected by state road construction (survey section F) by providing the zip codes of all areas where current road improvement is in the planning or construction stages. Using those zip codes, either DMV licensed driver lists or purchased RDD lists of households in those areas could be used as the sampling frame for that quota.
- ◆ The transportation districts should also supply lists of landowners with whom it has had contact regarding road projects, whether or not any payment was made. (Such lists were provided for the focus group phase of this research, but were not requested for the pilot test because we wanted to estimate the natural incidence, which we found to be about 1% of the total respondent base.)

Assuming such customer lists exist in some format, the technology allowing each division to provide its customer lists should not be an obstacle: list formats do not need to be particularly consistent. Any flat file can be used, so divisions should be able to keep their current structures. Privacy concerns can be minimized by careful handling of the lists. Further, interviewers are required to adhere to industry standards for confidentiality. If the survey is presented to the respondent as a random call, he or she can either volunteer or decline to answer questions about, for example, a traffic violation.

However, we understand that some of these customer lists (with phone numbers) do not currently exist, or are not centrally located, so providing them will require an investment of DOT's time and money. We emphasize that the quality of the customer satisfaction study will be much higher and the cost much lower if named lists are used rather than RDD lists. Although 93% of the people we contacted were able to complete some portion of the survey, some sections had as few as 3, 4, or 14 respondents. Finding a statistically reliable number of respondents for those sections by using an RDD list could cost many times more in interviewer labor than if a named list were available. The cost of using both list types is outlined on page 18 of this report. The difference is dramatic, and the financial resources could be better used by improving the customer databases for these three customer-focused DOT divisions.

Table 1 shows the incidence of each transaction type based on the pilot test, and indicates how many contacts would need to be made to complete 380 surveys using an RDD list. Contacts are calls in which the interviewer locates a respondent who is willing to participate. We generally expect to dial 7 to 10 calls to make a contact. Thus we expect to dial 1,000 numbers to make 100 contacts, from which we will obtain the number of completed surveys shown in the incidence column in Table 1. For example, if we dialed 1,000 numbers, we would expect 100 contacts (individuals who are willing to answer screening questions). Of these 100 contacts, 47 would likely qualify for the in-person DMV transaction portion of the study. Note, however, that there would be some overlap; contacts not applicable to one quota could sometimes be used to fill another.

	Incidence of qualified respondents determined from pilot test	Projected number of contacts to complete 380 sample using RDD lists
DMV transaction in person	47%	809
DMV transaction by phone, by mail or on-line	41%	927
Driver encountered state roadwork	86%	442
State Patrol provided motorist assistance*	1%	38,000
State Patrol made traffic violation stop	7%	5,429
Town or neighborhood affected by roadwork	19%	1,579
Property owners affected by roadwork*	1%	38,000

There are two transaction types with extremely low incidence (\*): motorist assistance and property affected by roadwork. Recruiting respondents for these sections of the survey with an RDD list would require extraordinary amounts of interviewing time and money; thus, **we do not recommend using an RDD list to recruit participants for the motorist assistance and property owners affected by construction sections of the survey:**

- ◆ If targeted lists are not available for the motorist assistance segment, we recommend dropping this customer group from the study. Assuming that most motorists in need of assistance are generally appreciative of receiving help from state troopers, we believe that there is a good chance the information received from these questions would not justify the cost of administering the survey using an RDD list.
- ◆ If targeted lists are not available for the property owners group, we recommend using county-provided lists of property owners who live in areas (zip codes) in which state construction projects have been recently conducted. This will probably not incur any costs from the counties, but will require a good bit of administrative labor to contact and follow up with each of several counties (probably not all 72 counties) and to integrate their separate lists into the final sample. Also, extending the property owners section to include business owners affected by roadwork could also improve the incidence rates.

Because licensed drivers age 16 and 17 are not adults, they were not included in the pilot test. To interview minors, it is good policy to obtain parental permission in advance, and this extra step would complicate the sample design more than we could justify given the scope of the pilot test. The effort of integrating this small segment of the population should be weighed against the value of the input that could be gathered. On balance, CRC's recommendation would be to leave them out of the sample, and our cost estimates are based on this choice. If DMV has a special interest in measuring the satisfaction of new drivers with the licensing process, or if the State Patrol wished to determine whether young drivers were satisfied with traffic stops and motorist assistance, these divisions could conduct their own targeted studies for this small population, using a sample design and random selection process that was specifically tailored for a population of minors.

*Sample size*

The sample size for the pilot test was set at 300, as the purpose of the pilot study, identified in the scope of Phase 3, was to test the customer satisfaction questions, rather than obtain results that accurately represent statewide opinion. Limiting the sample size meant that not only were some transaction types under-studied, but also smaller demographic sub-cells were underrepresented. For example, for 11 of Wisconsin's 72 counties, there were no respondents in the pilot test sample.

To comply with industry standards for service-oriented organizations, we recommend that results from the large-scale ongoing study be reported on a quarterly basis. Further, we recommend that the sample size is large enough to yield a margin of error of  $\pm 5\%$  for each transaction type. To achieve this margin of error in each of the six transaction types, we will need quotas of 380 in each, for a total of 2,280 per quarter (9,120 annually).

Not only will this provide the industry-standard margin of error for each transaction type, but the margin of error for the total population will be even more accurate ( $\pm 2\%$ ), and we will also have acceptable margins of error for demographic subcategories (age, gender, region, etc.).

A sample of 380 is recommended on the assumption that there is a large population in the state who have experienced each of these transaction types. If any of these has a statewide total below 5,000, the relevant sample will be set lower. For example, if the actual population people who had received motorist assistance by a state trooper was 1,000, the required sample to achieve a  $\pm 5\%$  margin of error would be 278. The figures calculated in this report are based on the assumption that the actual population size for each customer division is sufficiently large enough ( $>5,000$ ) to warrant a sample size of 380. The sample sizes can easily be recalculated if DOT provides information contrary to this assumption.

The quotas for some transaction types should be adjusted to reflect seasonal differences. For example, there is less road construction and perhaps more motorist assistance in winter, so the sections addressing these topics might have a sample size of 0 in some months and 200 in others, still totaling to 1,520 per year, as it would be if it were 380 per quarter. These seasonal sample sizes should be set based on divisions' data about volume of services provided over the course of the year. CRC and VK do not have this information and so cannot make a recommendation at this time.

Also note that, if targeted samples are not available for the motorist assistance section of the survey, we recommend dropping it entirely, rather than resorting to trying to find these low-incidence customers on an RDD list. In this case, the sample would be 1900 per quarter (5 customer types x 380).

#### *Frequency of data collection*

If the budget permits, we recommend that data be analyzed and reported quarterly, with reports showing change compared to the previous quarters and to the same quarter the previous year. Data should be collected year-round; if it were collected during one short period, responses would reflect seasonal influences.

CRC recommends that reports be delivered quarterly on a sample size of 2,280 per quarter (380 x 6 divisions); this would translate to 760 surveys per month or 9,120 per year. This would provide a 5% margin of error for each transaction type each quarter, while also providing a large enough sample over the course of the year so that demographic sub-quotas (e.g., age, gender, region) would have very reliable margins of



error. These data could be used to make reliable comparisons among groups each quarter.

To accommodate a smaller budget, analysis and reporting could be delivered two times per year instead of quarterly. To maintain a margin of error of  $\pm 5\%$ , we recommend a sample size of 2,280 every two quarters, which translates to 380 surveys per month or 4,560 per year. Yet another option is to analyze and report customer satisfaction data one time per year. This would require a sample size of 2,280 participants annually, which translates to 190 surveys per month. Although these options are less desirable than the preferred quarterly recommendation, conducting the study of this magnitude less frequently will still provide valuable information for DOT. However, it would not be possible to compare satisfaction from season to season in any given year (concluding, for example, that highway drivers are more satisfied in winter than summer), and it would be difficult to assess the immediate impact of any particular policy change.

If the goal of the survey is to provide tracking data that measures the impact of policy changes, the measurement schedule should be tied to the implementation of the policy changes. A quarterly reporting period is probably short enough to accommodate this in most cases. If a dramatic change were made in mid-quarter, the reporting structure for that quarter could be adjusted to reveal differences among surveys conducted before and after the date of the change.

Based on DOT's two-year budget cycle, VK has recommended that the survey schedule allow reports to be delivered in time for DOT to prepare for their biennial budget submittal which occurs in September. Thus, we recommend that annual summaries of the data be delivered in the month of July to allow adequate time to meet this goal.

#### *Analysis of customer satisfaction data*

Customer satisfaction data provides opportunities to conduct very useful analyses. First, a gap analysis is an effective way to display how important respondents feel a certain factor is versus how satisfied they were with a particular encounter. A gap analysis can be conducted by plotting the importance ratings of a certain factor by satisfaction scores of that same factor. This data analysis strategy is used in the pilot study report which appears at the end of this document. Another very useful data analysis tool is regression analysis. Regression analysis can be used to identify "drivers" of satisfaction, or factors that have a greater impact on overall satisfaction than others. In this case, the overall satisfaction measure for each section would be the dependent variable, with the factors of interest as the independent variables. This would be a useful strategy for DOT to use if their goal is to choose the most important components to prioritize. This strategy is not used in the pilot study because of the small sample size for each component of the study; however, an example appears in the executive summary. Finally, factor analysis could also be used if DOT is interested in grouping variables into more meaningful categories. For example, if factors, such as respect, friendliness, and consideration perform similarly, they could be grouped into one category called customer care. The advantage of using factor analysis is to simplify analyses and make meaningful conclusions.

#### **Vendor vs. DOT Analysis of Customer Satisfaction Survey Data**

We have identified two main options for analyzing the customer satisfaction data: contract a vendor to conduct data analysis or use internal analysts and expertise to conduct data analysis in-house. In this section we analyze the advantages and disadvantages of each option. Although the scope of this project originally included an

analysis of survey administration software, DOT has decided that based on the complexity of this survey administration, this function will likely be outsourced.

*Option 1: Contracting a vendor to conduct the analysis*

Contracting a vendor is the best option for conducting data analysis if DOT does not have the necessary resources to assign to analyzing its customer satisfaction data. Contracting a vendor would not require the time of DOT staff members and would not require DOT to purchase software or train employees on a new system. Further, contracting a vendor that is independent from DOT could lend credibility to the survey results, as there would be no question of conflict of interest. Finally, vendors who specialize in customer satisfaction research have developed expertise and knowledge for conducting this type of analysis and could conduct it with great efficiency and timeliness. The disadvantage to hiring an outside vendor to conduct analysis could be cost, if it were more expensive than the cost of conducting the analysis internally.

	Advantages	Disadvantages
<b>Option 1: Contract a vendor to conduct data analysis</b>  Estimated cost: Depends on vendor	Does not require DOT staff time  Vendor's advanced knowledge in data will support integrity of conclusions  Potential for enhanced perception of objectivity and independence with use of outside vendor	Potential for increased costs when compared with the in-house option  Ability of DOT to conduct additional analyses could be limited, depending on the vendor

*Option 2: Conducting the analysis in-house*

Analyzing the customer satisfaction data internally is the best option if DOT has available staff members who are familiar with analyzing data and a budget for purchasing software to analyze customer satisfaction data in-house and/or training DOT staff members to use the software. If the department chooses this option, it will need to determine who is responsible for the data analysis and allow that person the time necessary to analyze the data, which is estimated to take between 40 and 60 hours per quarter, assuming the results are analyzed and reported on a quarterly basis. That individual along with relevant in-house IT support staff will need to decide on a software system to use for the analysis; this could involve training the analysts on a new software package. However, in-house analysis allows for potential cost savings if an outside vendor costs more than the staff time and software costs of conducting the analysis in-house.

If DOT decides to conduct data analysis in-house, it will need to decide whether to use the current system (SAS), or to purchase a new software package. Because it was not possible to conduct specific surveys of current SAS users to determine the extent to which SAS meets departmental needs in other areas, a specific analysis of software systems on relevant dimensions to DOT analysts was not possible. However, VK distributed a survey to software vendors, including SAS, SPSS, PSTAT, and Insightful, asking about specific business requirements that could be served by their systems and system cost. SPSS provided a detailed response to the survey, which has been previously forwarded to DOT. SAS indicated that their team would be willing to meet with DOT

analysts to discuss specific requirements, but could not provide general information in the form of a survey. PSTAT and Insightful did not reply to the survey. Thus, if DOT elects to conduct the analysis in-house, it will need to determine who will be responsible for data analysis. That individual, along with relevant in-house IT support staff, should conduct additional research to determine which software best meets the department needs (taking into account individual skill sets, existing software knowledge, the ability of software packages to meet the requirements of DOT analysts, and costs). Thus, the chart below identifies advantages and disadvantages of two options if DOT chooses to conduct data analysis in-house.

	Advantages	Disadvantages
<b>Option 2a: Conduct analysis in-house using SAS</b>  Estimated cost: not available	Allows for potential cost savings if less than it costs to contract a vendor  DOT has in-house SAS expertise and in-house SAS support may be available	Requires staff time commitment (minimum 40-60 hours per quarter to conduct analysis)  May require staff training in SAS  Potential for retraining may be required with position turnover
<b>Option 2b: Conduct analysis in-house using another data analysis software</b>  Estimated cost: \$10-\$20,000 year 1 plus staff support	Allows for potential savings if less than it costs to contract a vendor  Allows DOT to select best fit software in the event that SAS is not determined as the preferred software	Requires staff time commitment (minimum 40-60 hours per quarter to conduct analysis)  Most likely requires staff training to learn new software  Potential for retraining may be required with position turnover  Lack of in-house expertise is likely and vendor support would be required

If DOT chooses to contract with an external vendor to conduct its customer satisfaction research, the following is a checklist of for comparing vendors' proposals:

- √ Vendor must have a proven track record in conducting customer satisfaction studies and provide a list of client references and industries in which they have conducted customer satisfaction studies
- √ Vendor must demonstrate experience doing large-scale projects with state agencies
- √ Vendor must have capabilities and resources necessary to execute 2280 telephone surveys per quarter
- √ Vendor must have the ability to produce cross-tabulations for data analysis
- √ Vendor must have statisticians who are proficient in running descriptive statistics, regression analysis, factor analysis, and gap analysis

However, if DOT chooses to conduct analyses in-house, we recommend they use SAS, which is already owned by the department. If DOT is inclined to choose this option,

they should first determine the costs associated with staff time to be allocated to analyzing data and potential SAS training and compare it to the cost of outsourcing the analysis to a vendor who specializes in customer satisfaction research.

### **Estimated First Year Data Collection Costs**

Costs are presented here for each step of the data collection as recommended, and with several variations. CRC recommends conducting the survey with sample size of 380 for each of the six transaction types, working from targeted lists. However, in case such lists are unavailable, the alternative will be to use RDD lists, or a combination of targeted and RDD lists, which will cost more. (We expect that the total cost of using an RDD list would be two to three times the cost to conduct the study using targeted lists.) Another factor affecting the cost will be how many times per year the survey is conducted. Also, any changes made to the survey instrument could affect the cost. All these options are discussed here. Note that our estimates of hourly rates would have to be confirmed through the RFP process.

The cost to complete 2280 surveys (380 per transaction type) using targeted lists will be approximately \$65,000 to \$75,000. We recommend completing this sample size quarterly, for an annual total of \$260,000 to \$300,000.

If targeted lists are not available, the cost to complete 1900 surveys, using RDD lists for four transaction types, county lists for one transaction type and dropping the sixth transaction type, would be approximately \$160,000 to \$170,000. This works out to an annual total of \$640,000 to \$680,000.

Vendors responding to your RFP should include their costs for the following steps:

#### *Design and programming*

There should be no design costs, since the instrument is provided, but there will be some administrative costs involved in helping to decide which of several alternatives to implement. Programming the survey instrument will incur some programming time. Expect vendors to charge for 10 to 40 hours.

#### *Administration and client updates*

A vendor's project manager will need to spend time keeping the data collection on track, on time, and budget. Depending on the annual sample size and how frequently reports are being produced, this could incur 1 to 10 hours.

#### *List costs*

If targeted lists are available, managing and integrating lists provided by the various divisions will take 1 to 6 hours each time lists are provided, which should be quarterly.

If RDD lists are needed, in addition to the list management costs there will be list purchase costs. As explained in the design section, in this situation, we recommend dropping the motorist assistance sample altogether, and using county-provided lists of property owners in the affected zip codes. For the remaining four transaction types, we would need to purchase an RDD list of 15,200 names. Based on our own list house's estimate in September 2002, we expect that cost to be approximately \$2700.

If multiple counties provide lists of property owners in areas affected by state highway construction, expect to spend approximately 20-40 hours contacting the counties and following up.

#### *Interviewing using targeted lists*

Using lists of qualified respondents provided by DOT, pulled recently enough to have current phone numbers, will result in a high incidence rate. Based on the pilot survey, we feel fairly confident that it would take 1520 hours to complete 2280 surveys. Note that market research is not a commodity that can be compared strictly on price. When comparing bids, be sure to consider the accuracy of the data collection, the experience of the interviewers and quality of the deliverables, in addition to cost.

#### *Interviewing using RDD lists*

If targeted lists are not available for any of the six transaction types, the entire sample would have to be drawn from RDD lists. Two of the six have incidence rates of approximately 1%, which means it would be prohibitively expensive to collect that data using RDD.

In this case, we recommend dropping the motorist assistance questions entirely, and, for the property owner questions, using county-supplied lists of property owners in zip codes identified by the transportation district (see the Design section of this report for a full explanation.) The incidence table in the Design section of this report (Table 1) shows which transaction types will be most expensive to conduct using RDD lists. We calculate it will take approximately 3800 hours to conduct 1900 surveys.

#### *Interviewing using combined targeted and RDD lists*

If targeted lists are available for some of the transaction types but not others, the cost will be somewhere between the two ranges presented above, depending on which lists are available.

#### *Frequency*

The cost of the study will be affected not only by the type of lists but the desired frequency of analysis and reporting of data in a given year. Regardless of how frequently data are analyzed and reported, the data should be collected on a monthly basis to avoid seasonal bias and should only be reported when there are enough surveys completed to achieve a  $\pm 5\%$  margin of error (380 for each section assuming that members of the population are greater than 5,000). The difference in cost depends on how many times each year DOT wishes to report reliable data; clearly, it will cost more to obtain a reliable sample every quarter than to do so only once per year.

#### *Analyses*

Ideally, we recommend analyzing and reporting data as often as possible; in this case, that means every quarter, so that reliable data can be used to identify subtle changes and correlate them to policy changes, seasonal effects, or other influences. Conducting analyses and reporting them should take approximately 35 to 50 hours for each time it is done. If results are analyzed and reported quarterly, it may take between 140 and 200 hours annually. These hours are based on the assumption that experienced analysts who are familiar with the data analysis tests are conducting them. It could take much longer to analyze data if data analysts lack experience.

#### *Revised survey instrument*

Keep in mind that the cost estimates provided are based on the provided survey instrument and sample report. If the instrument were shortened or lengthened, if customer types were deleted, or if open-ended questions were added, the costs would

change. Open-ended questions require coding and proofing, which can add several dollars per survey to the cost.

## **Section II:**

### **Pilot Customer Satisfaction Data Report**

## **Department of Transportation Customer Satisfaction Data Report**



## **Introduction and Methodology**

### **Background**

Chamberlain Research Consultants (CRC) partnered with Virchow Krause and Company (VK) to develop a customer satisfaction mechanism for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT). After developing this tool, CRC conducted a pilot study using the customer satisfaction survey questions. The purpose of this pilot study was to test the sampling methodology and questions in the customer satisfaction survey. However, this test was not conducted with a large enough sample size to derive meaningful conclusions. Thus, this report should be reviewed solely as a sample of how data from a customer satisfaction study would be reported rather than as a comprehensive study on which to base decisions about funding or improvement of services.

### **Survey**

The customer satisfaction survey (see Appendix X) was created through collaboration between CRC, VK, and DOT. Three different divisions of DOT are covered in this survey: The Division of Motor Vehicles, State Patrol, and Transportation Districts. To gain a better understanding of the factors that influence customer satisfaction in each division, CRC conducted focus groups with DOT customers. The factors of customer satisfaction that emerged from these groups were used to create the survey questions for each DOT division. After a draft of the survey was created by CRC, it went through a number of reviews and revisions with VK and DOT before becoming finalized.

The customer satisfaction survey was conducted via telephone from a random list (RDD) of Wisconsin residents. Participants were asked to rate customer satisfaction questions on a 10-point scale based on their personal experiences with DOT divisions. The experiences of interest in this survey were categorized into the six following sections:

- ◆ In-person experiences with the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
- ◆ Mail, phone, or on-line contact with DMV
- ◆ Encounters with road construction on a state highway
- ◆ Experience receiving motorist assistance from the Wisconsin State Patrol
- ◆ Experience with a traffic violation with the Wisconsin State Patrol
- ◆ Experience with personal or community property being affected by construction or expansion of a state highway.

In each section of the survey, participants were asked to rate both how important each factor was to them and their satisfaction with that factor during with their last encounter with the division on a 10 point scale, with 1 being a poor rating and 10 being an excellent rating. This allows us to perform a gap analysis. A gap analysis can uncover inconsistencies among what DOT delivers and what customers feel is important for DOT to deliver. The “gap” is the difference between the importance rating and the satisfaction rating.

### **Analyses**

The analyses conducted in this sample report are limited to gap analysis; although the results cannot be generalized to the population because of the small sample size, it was possible to conduct a gap analysis for each section for purposes of illustration. Future studies that include a sufficiently large sample size, as recommended in the design section of this report, have far more possibilities in terms of analysis. In particular, regression analyses could be used to identify which components of satisfaction are more or less

important to a particular sub-group. For example, regression analysis would allow DOT to determine whether a quick transaction or being able to figure out which forms to fill out impacts satisfaction more. This type of analysis was not possible to conduct in this pilot study because of the small sample size in each section of the survey.

### **Respondent Profile**

A total of 300 DOT customers participated in this survey. Demographic information about this sample is provided in this section.

#### *Gender, age, and race*

Forty-eight percent of the participants in this study were males and 52% were females. In addition, most of the respondents were white (95%), whereas a very small number reported being from an ethnic minority (4%). One participant refused to reveal his or her race. Finally, over half of the respondents in this study (57%) were between the ages of 25 and 54. Thirty-two percent were over the age 54, and only 11% were under the age of 25.

#### *Geography*

In this study, 43% of participants indicated that they lived in a rural area. Thirty-one percent live in suburban areas, and 26% live in urban locations.

#### *Driving experience*

Most of the participants in this sample (98%) were licensed to drive in the State of Wisconsin. Only 2% (6 participants) did not have a Wisconsin driver's license.

In addition, 18% of participants reported driving less than 5,000 miles per year, and 23% drove between 5,000 and 9,999 miles. Twenty-three percent reported driving between 10,000 and 14,999 miles per year, and 16% drove between 15,000 and 20,000 miles. Eighteen percent of the sample reported driving more than 20,000 miles per year. Five respondents (2%) were unable to estimate the number of miles they drove in a year.

#### *Experience with DOT*

To keep the time respondents were on the phone to a minimum, participants answered a few broad questions about DOT and then were then routed one particular section of the survey depending on the experiences they reported having with DOT divisions within the last six months. If a participant had experience with more than one division, the least common experience was prioritized. The prioritized list goes in order as follows from highest priority to lowest priority: motorist assistance, property owners affected by highway expansion, traffic violation stop, DMV in-person, DMV by phone, mail or on-line, and traffic and road construction. Thus, for example, if an individual reported both going to the DMV in person and being stopped for a traffic violation in within the past six months, he or she would have been routed to the traffic violation section of the survey.

The following is a breakdown of how many participants answered each section:

Section of the survey	Total number who had this experience	Number who responded to section on survey
DMV In-person	142	108
DMV, by phone, mail, or on-line	122	44
Traffic and road construction	259	74
Motorist assistance	3	3
Traffic violation stop	25	14
Property owners and community residents affected by highway expansion	58	57

Thus, the most common experience was visiting the DMV in person, whereas few had been stopped for traffic violations in the past six months. These numbers suggest that the priority for placing individuals in categories was generally on par. However, more participants in this sample indicated that their properties or communities had been affected by highway construction than reported receiving traffic violations from state troopers; in fact, although a total of 25 respondents reported being stopped by a state trooper for a traffic violation, a number of these respondents were also property owners affected by highway expansion. Given that highway expansion was a higher priority than traffic violation stops, those who shared both experiences were routed to the property owners section. Thus, this may suggest a priority change between property owners and traffic violation stops.

### **Executive Summary**

This executive summary provides a brief overview of the study results. More detailed results are presented in the Detailed Findings. Given that this is a pilot study intended to test customer satisfaction questions relevant to each DOT division of interest, the results presented here should be viewed as an illustration of what a research report would look like rather than data to guide plans of actions for DOT.

#### *Overall findings*

Overall, participants appeared to be very satisfied with their experiences with DOT. Although there are opportunities identified in this report to increase customer satisfaction in certain areas, it should be noted that these are very minor adjustments and that the overall perception of DOT and its divisions tested in this study is very positive.

#### *Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)*

Respondents in this study were generally satisfied with their transactions with the DMV in person, by phone, by mail, and on-line. In-person contact was clearly the most common form of contact with the DMV. Respondents were extremely satisfied with the way in which DMV offices completed transactions in a timely manner, made it easy for customers to know where to go when they got to the office, and made paperwork easy to fill out. In addition, participants felt that paperwork mailed to them from the DMV office was easy to understand and complete. Finally, the DMV Web site had up-to-date information that was useful to respondents.

Opportunities for improving satisfaction with transactions with the DMV are as follows:

- ◆ Decrease the amount of time customers have to wait in line at the DMV office by hiring more staff, better organizing lines, or creating an express line for quick questions
- ◆ Make sure that clerks in the DMV office treat customers in a friendly and respectful way by holding training sessions seminars for employees
- ◆ Ensure that DMV operators are knowledgeable about a variety of DMV processes so they can assist customers in a timely and efficient manner when they call the DMV office
- ◆ Set a goal of seeing that customers who call the DMV are not on hold for more than five minutes and that the entire transaction is completed within 10 to 15 minutes
- ◆ Try to decrease the amount of time that mail transactions take by hiring more employees to handle incoming mail or offering incentives to current workers for quickly and accurately completing mail transactions
- ◆ Conduct research to gain a better understanding of that types of information DOT customers look for on-line and make sure this information is available on the Web site
- ◆ Conduct usability tests on the Web site to make sure it is easy to navigate

#### *Traffic and road construction*

Respondents were generally happy with the way road construction projects on state highways are handled by DOT. Results showed that worksites are staffed appropriately during normal working hours.

Opportunities for improving satisfaction for customers who encounter road construction on state highways in Wisconsin are as follows:

- ◆ Make sure that advance warning is given to customers when a road is going to be closed or when a detour exists. This can be done by contacting local radio stations who broadcast closed roads and detours during rush-hour traffic or putting signs up that inform customers of the project in advance
- ◆ Clearly mark detours and keep signs that direct drivers up-to-date
- ◆ Enforce traffic laws in work zones so workers and drivers stay safe
- ◆ Create signs for ongoing projects that display how much progress has been made and how much there is left to go so drivers can see progress being made

#### *Motorist assistance*

Respondents who received motorist assistance from the Wisconsin State Patrol were satisfied the amount of time it took a state trooper to reach them and felt that the state trooper made a special effort to help with their problem. Further, in all instances, participants noted that state trooper helped to resolve the situation.

Two ways in which state troopers can take steps to increase satisfaction among distressed motorists are as follows:

- ◆ Treat motorists with respect by trying to empathize with their situation
- ◆ Identify themselves as a Wisconsin State Trooper and present their badge immediately so drivers know who they are

#### *Traffic violation stop*

Wisconsin State Troopers received extremely high satisfaction scores, even from participants who were stopped for traffic violations. Traffic violators felt that state troopers listened to their side of the story, completed the interaction in a reasonable amount of time, and treated them with respect.

One opportunity for improving satisfaction with traffic violation interaction is for the state trooper to provide very clear instructions of what to do when motorists are pulled over (for example, instructing them to stay in or get out of the vehicle).

#### *Property owners and community residents affected by construction on state highways*

Property owners and community residents affected by construction were the least satisfied of the respondents participating in this study; however, their satisfaction with the way in which projects were conducted was relatively high, given that their lives had been disrupted in a more direct way than other participants in the study. Respondents who had personal properties affected by construction were happy that DOT evaluated their situation individually and that they had an opportunity to negotiate with DOT.

Opportunities for improving satisfaction of property owners and community residents affected by highway expansion are as follows:

- ◆ Involve local residents in decisions about projects that affect their communities by attending town meetings to give residents an opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns about the projects
- ◆ To the extent possible, take the wishes of the community into account when planning a major construction project
- ◆ When personal driveways or entrances to businesses are disrupted, create alternate routes so these destinations can be accessed
- ◆ When personal property is affected, communicate with property owners well in advance of the project and communicate an accurate prediction of the project timeline; continue communication about the project as the timeline changes to keep property owners informed of the project schedule

#### *Perceptions of state highway system*

When asked to compare Wisconsin's interstate and state highway system with other those of other states, 80% of participants felt that Wisconsin's highways were either better than or the same as other states' highway systems. Only 11% felt that Wisconsin's state highways were worse than others.

#### *DOT Web site*

Most respondents (84%) had never visited DOT's Web site. Only 16% reported visiting the Web site, and the most common reason for visiting it was to renew a vehicle registration. Thus, this is a resource that is currently underutilized. To increase use of the Web site, DOT should consider the following:

- ◆ Enhance visibility of vehicle registration reminders that inform the public that they can re-register their vehicles on-line
- ◆ Put a message on the DOT telephone system that tells people of the Web site while they are waiting on hold for an operator

- ◆ Create marketing materials that advertise the possibilities of conducting business with the DOT Web site and that this form of interaction can be executed in an efficient, accurate way

## Detailed Findings

### Overall Perceptions of DOT Divisions

Before answering detailed questions about a particular division of DOT, all participants were asked to rate each division of interest, as well as the entire DOT, in terms of overall perception, ranging from very positive to very negative.

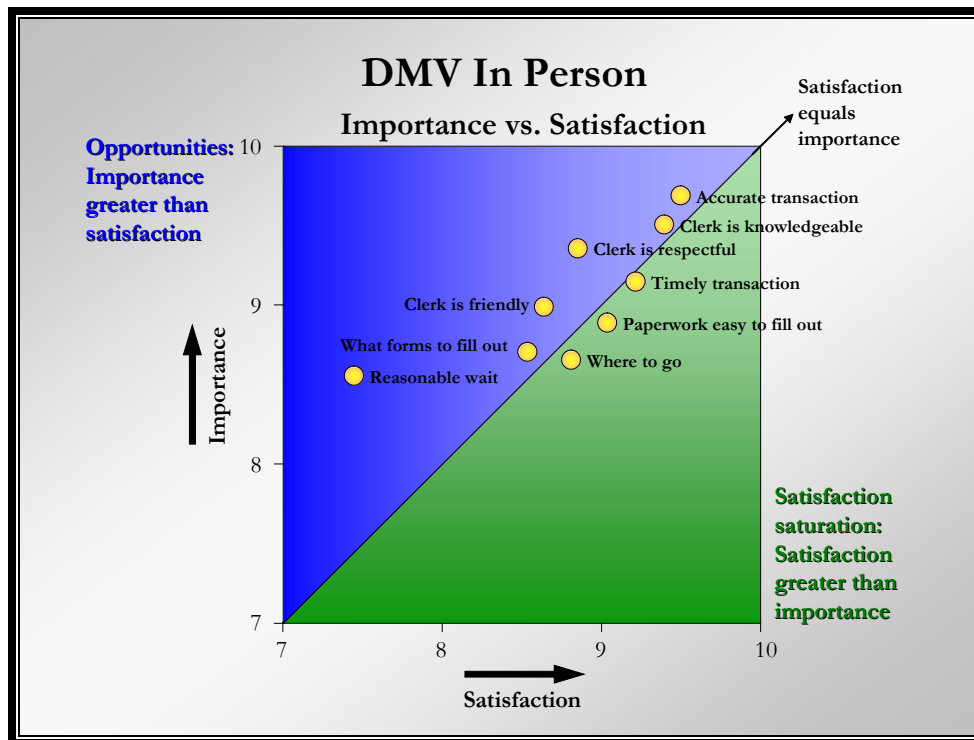
Overall, participants appear to have a very favorable impression of DOT and its divisions, as the average ratings for each division were well over the midpoint on a 10-point scale.

### DMV In Person

In the first section of the study, 108 participants who had visited the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) in person within the past six months rated their impressions of that experience. The most common reason that participants had for visiting the DMV in person was to renew a driver's license.

#### *Importance versus satisfaction*

First, participants rated how important the following factors were when visiting the DMV: easy to figure out where to go, easy to figure out what forms to fill out, forms and paperwork easy to complete, a reasonable wait to reach the counter, transaction completed in a timely manner, the transaction completed accurately, clerk is knowledgeable about the process, clerk is respectful, and clerk is friendly. After rating the importance of these attributes, participants rated their satisfaction with each of the attributes. The gap analysis of importance versus satisfaction is displayed in Figure 2.



As shown in Figure 2, participants were generally satisfied with their visit to the DMV office; in fact, the no attribute received an average score below 7.0 on a 10-point scale. The gap analysis shown above indicates that respondents are particularly satisfied with the timeliness of the transaction when they reach the counter, the ease of knowing what forms to fill out, and knowing where to go when they walk in to the DMV. The gap analysis shows that there are opportunities for DMV to take action to make some improvements. The biggest gap is between importance placed on having a reasonable wait to reach the DMV counter and satisfaction with this attribute. In addition, the DMV could provide more direction in terms of what forms customers need to fill out. Finally, respondents felt that clerks could be more friendly and respectful of customers.

#### *Priorities and expectations*

Previous research has shown that speedy service and being treated with courtesy and respect are priorities to DMV customers. To further understand customers' priorities with respect to these two qualities, they were asked to choose which one was more important to them. Over two-thirds of the respondents indicated that if they had to choose, they would prioritize being treated with courtesy and respect, (68%) over getting the interaction over with quickly (32%).

In addition, participants were asked what they considered to be a reasonable amount of time spent in the DMV office to renew a driver's license. Responses ranged from 5 to 45 minutes, with the over half of respondents (53%) indicating 15 to 20 minutes was appropriate. Twenty-six percent indicated that they would be willing to wait 30 minutes.



### *Overall satisfaction*

Finally, respondents rated their overall satisfaction with their most recent visit to the DMV office on a 10-point scale, with 10 meaning extremely satisfied and 1 meaning not at all satisfied. Results showed that 80% of respondents rated their experience an 8, 9, or 10 on the 10-point scale, with an average of 8.22. Thus, participants appeared to be quite satisfied with their visit to the DMV office.

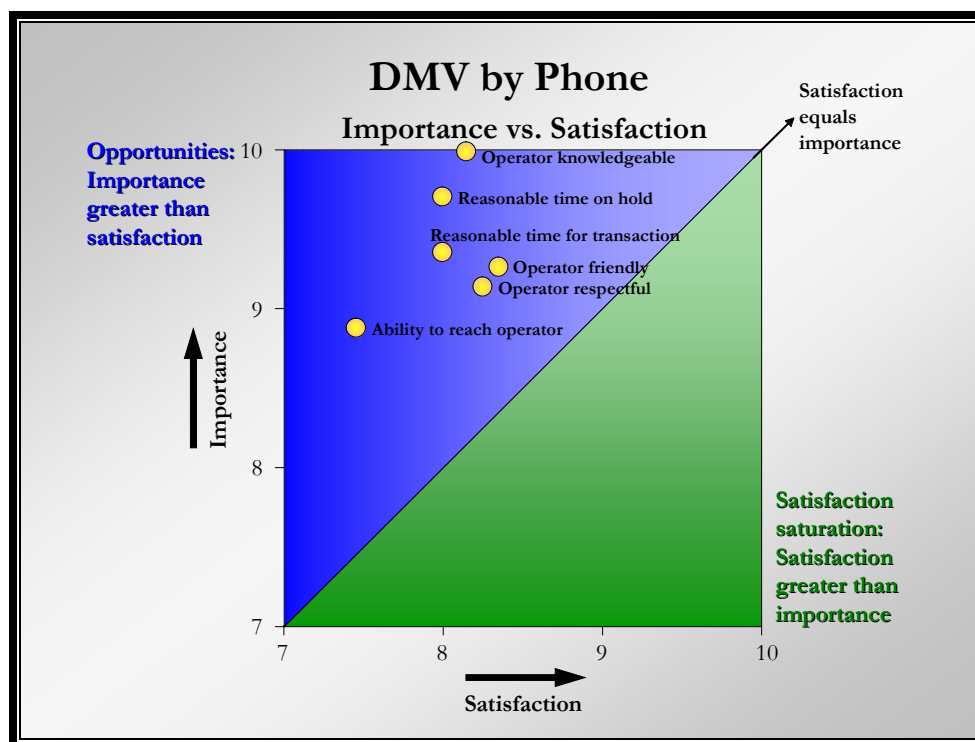
### **DMV by Phone, Mail, or On-line**

#### ***DMV by phone***

Eleven participants answered questions about their telephone interactions with the DMV. Although these data are presented for the purpose of illustration, it should be noted that this is a very small number of respondents; many more respondents should be surveyed before drawing meaningful conclusions.

#### *Importance versus satisfaction*

Respondents were first asked to rate the importance of the following attributes of the DMV by phone: ability to reach an operator if necessary, waiting a reasonable amount of time on hold, the operator is respectful, the operator is friendly, the operator is knowledgeable, the entire transaction is completed in a reasonable amount of time. After rating the importance of these factors, respondents rated their satisfaction with each on their last phone transaction.



Again, as shown in Figure 3, respondents were generally satisfied with the telephone transactions they had with the DMV, as none of the attributes received an average rating of less than 7.0 on a 10-point scale, with 10 meaning extremely satisfied and 1 meaning not at all satisfied. In addition, 9 out of the 11 respondents indicated that they received the information they needed from the transaction. However, when comparing the gap between importance and satisfaction, the DMV has opportunities to improve on all attributes, as importance scores were greater than satisfaction scores on all attributes.

#### *Priorities and expectations*

Respondents were also asked to prioritize whether they would like to get accurate information quickly via recorded message or wait to speak to a person. Eight of the 11 respondents indicated they would prefer to wait and speak to a person over getting information from a recorded message. Further, participants indicated that an appropriate time to wait on hold was between one and five minutes, and the entire phone transaction should take no more than 15 minutes.

#### *Overall satisfaction*

When asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the entire phone transaction, 7 out of the 11 participants (64%) gave the transaction a rating of 8, 9, or 10, on a 10-point scale. Thus, participants seemed to be generally satisfied with their telephone transaction.

#### ***DMV by mail***

A total of 28 respondents indicated that they had contact with DMV via mail within the past 6 months. The most common reason respondents contacted the DMV by mail was to renew a vehicle registration (79%).

#### *Importance versus satisfaction*

Participants rated the importance of the following four factors when interacting with the DMV by mail: receiving notice far enough in advance of needing to act, forms and paperwork are easy to understand and complete, transaction is completed promptly, and the transaction is completed accurately. After rating the importance of each attribute, respondents rated their satisfaction with that attribute based on their most recent mail transaction.

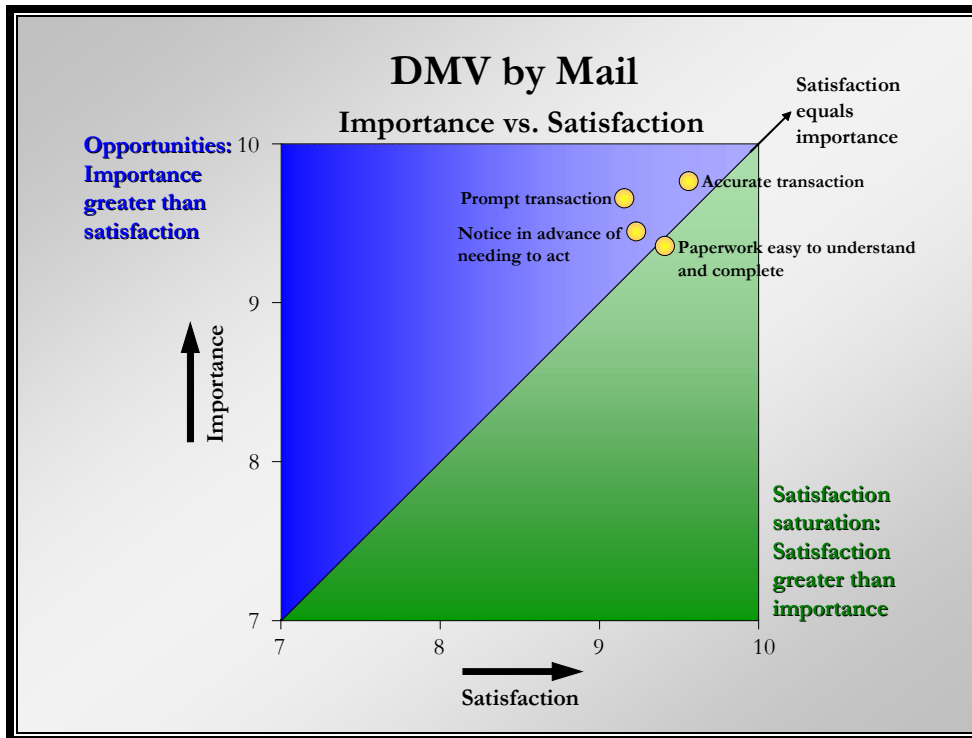


Figure 4 shows that respondents had very positive interactions with the DMV by mail; in fact, none of the attributes received average scores lower than 8.0 on a 10-point scale, which is extraordinary for a service provider division. Respondents were particularly satisfied with how easy it is to understand and complete paperwork. Although there is a slight gap between importance and satisfaction with respect to the promptness of transactions and advance notice of needing to act, these satisfaction ratings are still quite high. One explanation is that the speed of the Internet has increased the expectation and importance of quick transactions for customers, which is not always possible by mail.

#### *Overall satisfaction*

Eighty-six percent of the participants (24 of the 28 respondents) rated their satisfaction with the overall transaction as an 8, 9, or 10 on a 10-point scale. Thus, in all, participants were very satisfied with their overall mail transaction with the DMV.

#### *DMV on-line*

Six respondents indicated that they interacted with the DMV on-line. Reasons for accessing the Web site included seeking information about regulations, renewing a vehicle registration, and checking the hours of DMV locations.

#### *Importance versus satisfaction*

Respondents rated the importance of three attributes when conducting on-line transactions with the DMV: the Web site is easy to navigate, the Web site has the information the customer was looking for, and the Web site information is current and up-to-date. After rating importance of each attribute, participants rated their satisfaction with those attributes on their most recent on-line transaction.

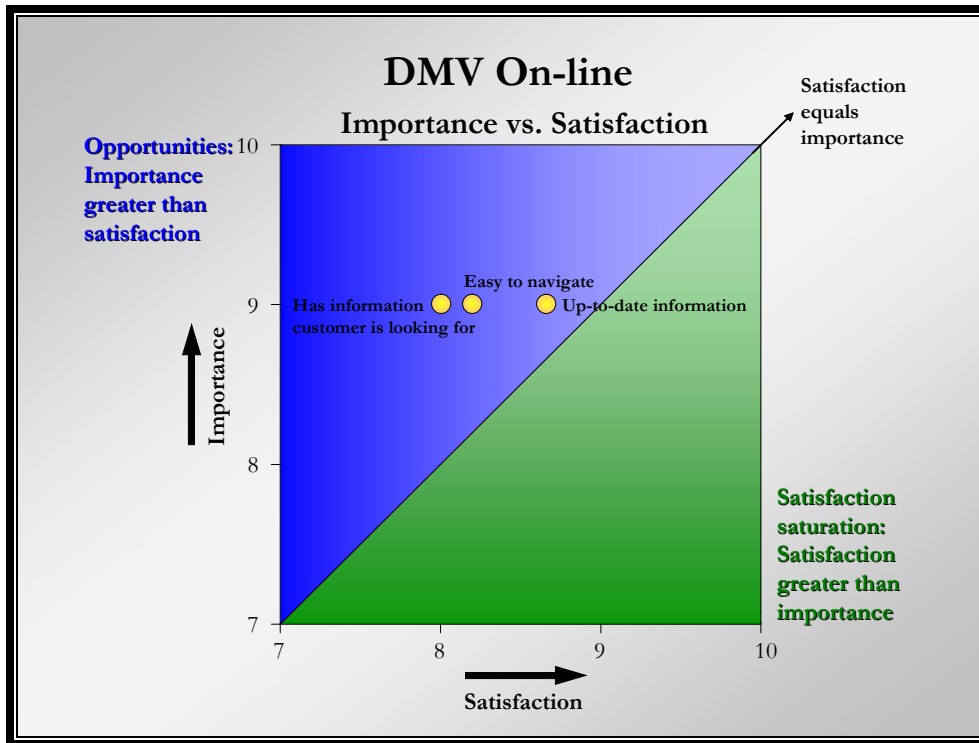


Figure 5 illustrates that respondents were very satisfied with their on-line experiences on DMV's Web site. None of the attributes received average ratings lower than 8.0 on a 10-point scale. According to these data, the DMV has opportunities to improve its Web site by including information that customers are looking for and making the Web site easy to navigate. However, this sample of six respondents merely illustrates a model for presenting the data and should not be used to make decisions at this time.

#### *Overall satisfaction*

Respondents rated their overall satisfaction with their latest on-line transaction on a 10-point scale. Five of the six participants gave their satisfaction a rating of 8, 9, or 10. Thus, the respondents sampled in this study appeared to be very happy with their on-line transactions.

#### **Traffic and Road Construction**

Seventy-four respondents in this study completed the section on traffic and road construction.

#### *Overall satisfaction with traffic and road construction on state highways*

Before answering importance and satisfaction questions in this section, participants were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with traffic and road construction on state highways. Overall, 45% of the participants gave traffic and road construction a satisfaction rating of 8, 9, or 10 on a 10-point scale, with a mean of 6.9. Only 4 participants (5%) gave it a low rating of 1, 2, or 3, and the rest were in the middle. Thus, respondents seem somewhat satisfied with state highway road construction.

### Importance versus satisfaction

Participants rated both importance and satisfaction on 13 different attributes: signs announcing road closing are kept up-to-date; detour routes are clearly marked and easy to follow; signs are posted far enough in advance so drivers can change their route; road closings and detours are announced to the public in advance; when access to a store or business is affected, there are clear signs directing customers; drivers see continuous progress; work site looks busy during normal working hours; good clean up when the job is complete; traffic laws are enforced in the construction zone; job is done in a reasonable amount of time; finished job is an improvement over what was there; driver safety is protected by appropriate measures; and road workers' safety is protected by appropriate measures.

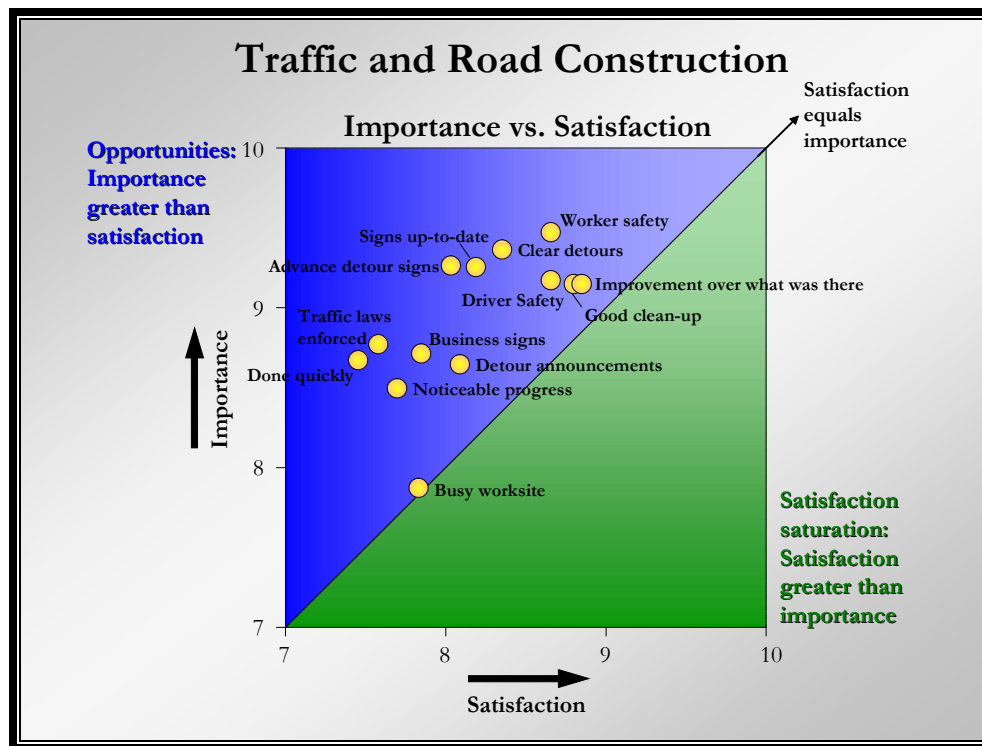


Figure 6 shows, again, that respondents are were satisfied with the way that road construction or projects on Wisconsin state highways are conducted. In fact, none of the attribute ratings received average scores lower than 7.0. The perception of a busy worksite during normal working hours is just about right in terms of importance and satisfaction; although that attribute did not receive the highest satisfaction score, its importance was equal to satisfaction, which means that DOT is right on the mark with keeping the worksite busy. However, the other attributes present opportunities for DOT to improve on the way it handles construction projects on state highways, as satisfaction scores for all other attributes were lower than importance ratings.

*Satisfaction with how the state spends money on road construction*

In addition to rating importance and satisfaction on attributes relevant to road construction, respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with how money is spent on these projects.

Overall, respondents feel that Wisconsin does a good job in terms of spending money on projects that are necessary, conducting the project right on the first try, and being cost efficient when planning projects.

*Priorities*

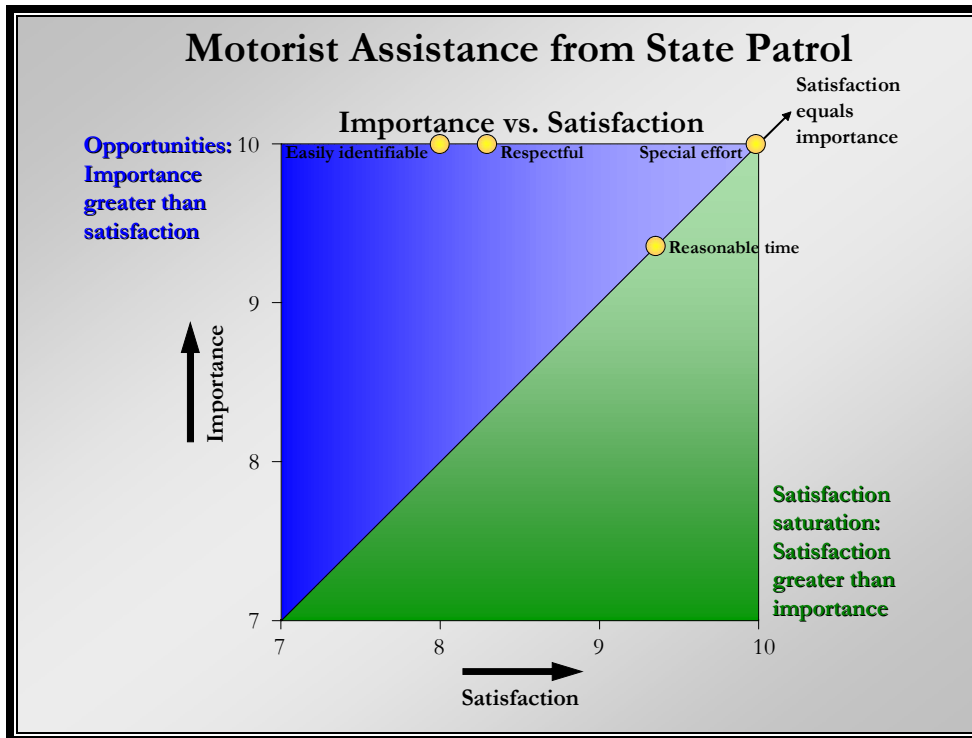
Next, participants were asked to prioritize two items: making it easy to navigate through construction zones and enforcing speed limits and other traffic rules in construction zones. The majority of participants (64%) preferred DOT to focus its efforts on enforcing speed limits and other rules in construction zones over making it easy to navigate through them (38%).

**Motorist Assistance**

Only three respondents in this sample reported receiving assistance from the Wisconsin State Patrol within the last six months. Although data are presented here for illustration purposes, more data needs to be collected before making decisions or recommendations about how to improve performance.

*Importance versus satisfaction*

First, respondents were asked to rate the importance of four attributes when being assisted by a state trooper: the state trooper treats you with respect, you wait a reasonable amount of time for help, you can easily identify the person who approaches you as a Wisconsin State Trooper, and the state trooper makes a special effort to help with your problem. After rating importance of these attributes, participants rated their satisfaction with these attributes based on their personal experience with receiving motorist assistance on these same factors.



All of the attributes in this section were extremely important to the three respondents who received motorist assistance, as 3 of the 4 attributes received importance scores of 10. The state troopers who were involved in these three instances have ideal performance in terms of appearing in a reasonable amount of time and making a special effort to help customers with their problems. There may be opportunities for improvement in terms of treating respondents with respect and identifying themselves as state troopers when they arrive at a scene.

#### *Overall satisfaction*

All three participants indicated that the state trooper helped to solve their problem. When asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the experience, two of the participants rated their experience as being extremely satisfying and one participant gave an average rating. The average of the three respondents' satisfaction scores was 8.0.

#### **Traffic Violation Stop**

Fourteen respondents answered questions regarding their experience with being stopped by a Wisconsin State Trooper for a traffic violation. Eight of these participants were issued a warning, whereas 6 were issued a citation; none were arrested.

### *Importance versus satisfaction*

First, respondents rated the importance with the following 9 attributes of their interaction with a state trooper for a traffic violation: you can easily identify the person who approaches you as a Wisconsin State Trooper, the state trooper explains why you were pulled over, you were stopped for a fair reason, you receive clear instructions of what to do, state trooper treats you with respect, state trooper behaves professionally, state trooper listens to your side of the story, state trooper does not try to bully or intimidate you, and the entire interaction takes a reasonable amount of time. After rating the importance of these factors, participants rated their satisfaction with their most recent traffic violation experience.

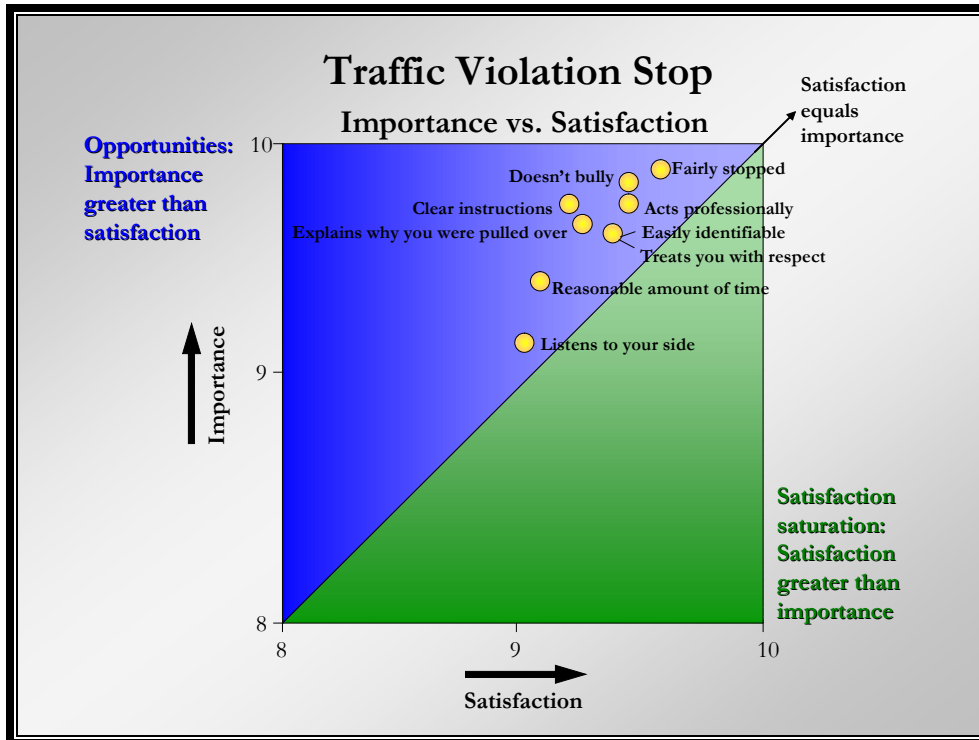


Figure 9 shows that respondents were extremely satisfied with the state troopers' performance, even during a traffic violation encounter; none of the attributes received an average rating of less than 9.0 on a 10-point scale. Although there is some room for improvement as noted by the small gaps between importance and satisfaction, all of the points are very close to the equilibrium line, which indicates that importance and satisfaction are very close.

### *Overall satisfaction*

Respondents also reported being satisfied with the overall traffic violation encounter; 86% gave their satisfaction a rating of 8, 9, or 10 on a 10-point scale, with a mean of 9.1; thus Wisconsin State Troopers are viewed very positively by DOT customers.



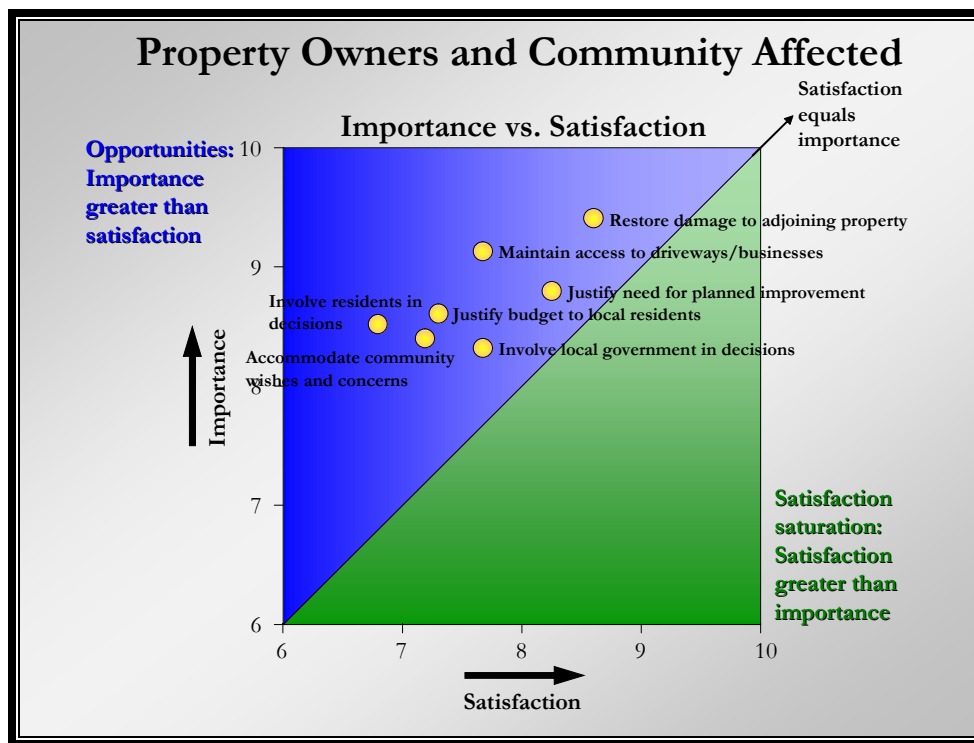
## Property Owners and Community Residents Affected by Highway Expansion

### *Property owners and community residents affected*

Fifty-seven respondents participated in the section of the survey that asked about property owners and community residents affected by highway expansion. Most of these respondents indicated that their community was affected by a state highway project within the last six months, and 12 had personal property that was affected.

### *Importance versus satisfaction*

Participants first rated the importance of the following seven attributes when considering property affected by highway expansion: involving local residents in decision making, involving local government in decision making, accommodating community wishes and concerns, justifying the proposed budget to local residents, justifying the need for the planned improvements, maintaining access to driveways and businesses, and restoring any damage to adjoining property. After rating importance, respondents rated their satisfaction with these attributes based on their experience with property affected by highway expansion.



Overall, respondents were relatively satisfied with the highway projects that affected their properties and communities; however, this satisfaction was slightly lower than in previous sections of the survey; as the lowest average attribute score was 6.86 on a 10-point scale. Perhaps the most pronounced opportunities for increasing satisfaction are to accommodate community wishes and concerns, and to involve residents in the decision-making process, justifying budget to local residents, and maintaining access to driveways and business that are affected by construction.

### *Overall satisfaction*

Overall, respondents were somewhat satisfied with efforts made by DOT when highway construction affected their properties or communities. Forty-six percent of participants rated their overall satisfaction as an 8, 9, or 10 on a 10-point scale, whereas only 4 people (7%) gave it a rating of 1, 2, or 3. The average overall satisfaction rating was 7.1.

### *Property owners affected*

Further, 12 respondents whose personal property was affected by a state highway construction project answered questions specific to their property.

### *Importance versus satisfaction*

The following eight attributes were rated first in terms of importance and then in terms of satisfaction: information about effects of the project were delivered far in advance, contact was made in an appropriate way, each situation is evaluated individually, there is an opportunity to negotiate with DOT, personal concerns are addressed, fair accommodations are received, DOT does what it promises, and there is an accurate prediction of the project timeline.

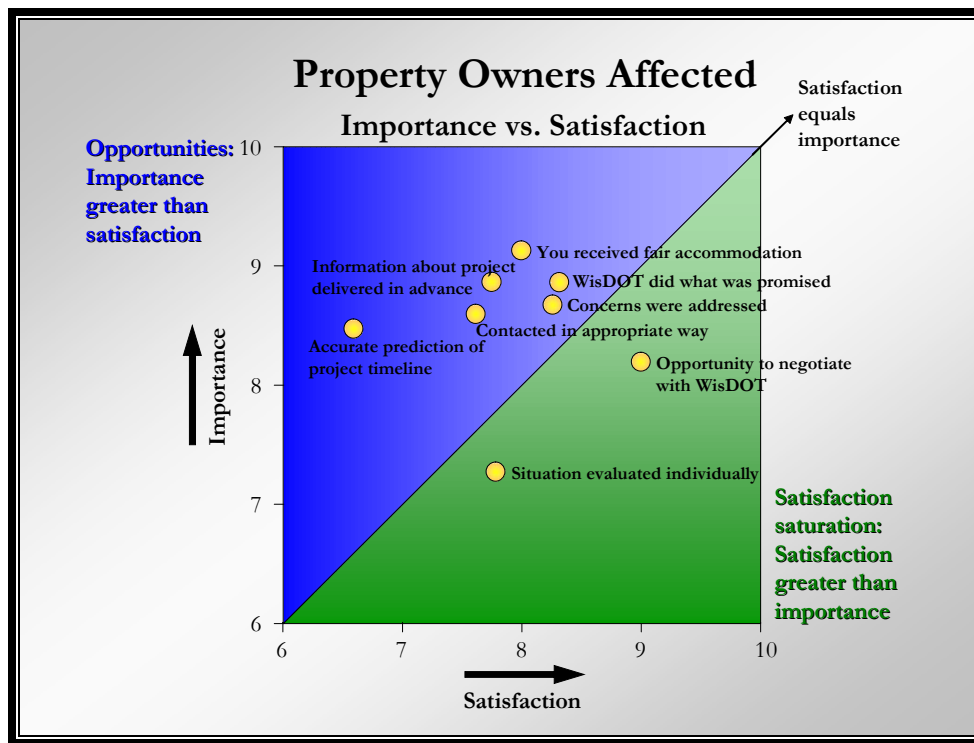


Figure 11 shows that respondents were generally satisfied, as only one of the attribute averages was below 7.0 on a 10-point scale. Respondents rated their satisfaction level higher than the importance they placed on DOT's willingness to evaluate each situation individually and negotiate with property owners. Opportunities for DOT to increase satisfaction with state highway projects that affect property owners would be to spend more time on the predictions of the project timelines so they are accurate and to provide

information about how the project will affect property owners well in advance of the project.

#### *Overall satisfaction*

Overall, 8 of the 12 participants rated their satisfaction with projects that affect their property as an 8, 9, or 10 on a 10-point scale. The average rating among respondents was 7.7. Thus, participants seem to be relatively satisfied with the overall experience of state highway projects that affect their personal property.

#### **Perceptions of Wisconsin's State Highway System**

After completing the appropriate section of the survey, all participants were asked questions about Wisconsin's highway system and DOT's Web site.

Participants were asked to compare Wisconsin's interstate and state highways to highway systems they have traveled in other states.

As shown in Figure 12, nearly half of the participants in this sample (46%) feel that Wisconsin's state highway system and interstate is comparable to other state highways. Thirty-four percent feel that Wisconsin has a better highway system than other states, whereas 11% say it is not as good as other states.

Of the 11% who felt that other states had better highway systems than Wisconsin, the five most common states named as having better systems were Illinois, Minnesota, Michigan, Florida, and Arizona. Notably, the states named most often are the states contiguous to Wisconsin (IL, MN, MI), followed by the snowbird states (FL, AZ). Thus, this likely reflects which states are most often traveled in, and does not necessarily provide an accurate comparison of driver satisfaction with the other 50 states. We recommend that when this survey is conducted in the future, this question be reworked keeping in mind the goals for which DOT wishes to use the findings. For example, if the goal is to compare Wisconsin's highways to Illinois' highways, all respondents should be asked if they have driven on Illinois highways, and then asked to compare them to Wisconsin highways.

#### **DOT's Web Site**

Finally, participants who did not previously answer questions about communicating with DMV online were asked to rate DOT's Web site.

Figure 13 shows the number of respondents who have visited DOT's Web site at some point in the future. Six respondents who answered questions about communicating with the DMV on-line did not answer this question. Most of the participants in this sample have never gone on-line to access the DOT Web site, which may indicate that this resource is being underutilized. If DOT wishes to increase use of its Web site, perhaps more advertising or informing customers with inserts in mailings would increase awareness.

Of the 16% who have used the Web site, the most common reason for visiting the site was to renew vehicle registration. Further, those who used the Web site seemed to be very satisfied with the transaction, with 71% of these respondents rating it an 8, 9, or 10, on a 10-point scale (10 means extremely satisfied, 1 means not at all satisfied).

In all, according to these respondents, it appears that the Web site functioned appropriately and gave respondents the information or access to services that they needed. Thus, one opportunity for increasing satisfaction with transactions is to promote use of the Web site for completing transactions.

## **Appendix 2A:**

### **Customer Satisfaction Survey Instrument**

WisDOT Customer Satisfaction Survey  
August/September 2002

*Sampling frame: Random from list (purchase proportionate to county population)*  
*Sample size for pilot test of survey instrument: target 300*  
*1–10 scale, plus NA (not applicable)*

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, I'm calling on behalf of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. DOT has hired my company, Chamberlain Research Consultants, to conduct a survey of Wisconsin drivers to evaluate public satisfaction with DOT's performance in several areas. The survey takes about 7 minutes – is this a good time for you? ..... Thanks. Just so you know, this call may be monitored by my supervisor, but it is not being recorded.

**Screening questions**

- S1. Are you are a licensed driver in the State of Wisconsin? YES OR NO
- S2. And what county do you live in? VERIFY MATCH TO LIST
- S3. Roughly how many miles a year do you drive? MARK ONE CATEGORY: 0-5K, 5-10, 10-15, 15-20, 20+ DK
- S4. In which, if any, of the following ways have you interacted with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation in the past 6 months?
- A. You went to the Division of Motor Vehicles office in person for any reason.
  - B. You did business with or got information from the DMV by phone, by mail or at its Web site.
  - C. You encountered road construction or a major maintenance project on a Wisconsin state highway (not a city or county road).
  - D. You received motorist assistance from the Wisconsin State Patrol, for example, if your car broke down on a state highway.
  - E. You were stopped for a traffic violation by the Wisconsin State Patrol, such as speeding or defective equipment.  
*VERIFY: And that was by a State Trooper on a state highway? (If no, use other priority answer)*
  - F. Your property, town or neighborhood was affected by construction or expansion of a state highway or interstate.

Did you personally own property that was directly affected by the construction?

IF RESPONDENT HAS NOT DONE ANY OF THE ABOVE, ASK IF ANYONE ELSE IN THE HOUSEHOLD HAS, AND ASK TO SPEAK TO THAT PERSON.

IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS YES FOR MORE THAN ONE OF THE ABOVE, CONSULT QUOTA PRIORITY LIST AND CHOOSE WHICH QUESTION SERIES TO ASK. ASK ONLY ONE SECTION (A B C D E OR F).

Using a scale of 1 to 10, overall how would you rate each of the following entities? Use a 10-point scale where 10 means very positive and 1 means very negative. MARK ON SCALE

- G1. Wisconsin Division of Motor Vehicles? MARK ON SCALE
- G2. Wisconsin State Patrol? MARK ON SCALE
- G3. Wisconsin State Highway system? MARK ON SCALE
- G4. Wisconsin DOT? MARK ON SCALE

### **Section A: DMV in person**

I'm going to ask you some questions about visiting the DMV in person. First I'll ask you to rate the importance of certain kinds of service. Then I'll ask you to rate your satisfaction with your most recent transaction.

- A1. First, please rate how important each one is to you any time you do business with the DMV in person. We'll use a 10-point scale where 10 means extremely important and 1 means not at all important. If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so. ROTATE ORDER
  - a. When you walk in, it's easy to figure out where to go
  - b. When you walk in, it's easy to figure out what forms to fill out
  - c. The forms and paperwork are easy to complete
  - d. It's a reasonable wait until you get to the counter
  - e. Once you get to the counter, the transaction is completed in a timely manner
  - f. The transaction is done accurately
  - g. The person helping you is knowledgeable about the process
  - h. The person helping you is respectful
  - i. The person helping you is friendly
- A2. Previous research has taught us that both speedy service and courtesy & respect are customer priorities at the DMV office. If you had to tell us your preference, which is more important to you, getting the transaction over with quickly, or being treated with courtesy and respect? MARK ONE (QUICKLY OR COURTESY & RESPECT)
- A3. What do you consider a reasonable amount of time to spend in the DMV office to renew your driver's license? RECORD EXACT NUMBER OF MINUTES: \_\_\_\_\_ minutes
- A4. You said the last time you went to the DMV office was within the last 6 months. What was the reason for that visit? MARK ALL
  - a. renew drivers license
  - b. get new drivers license
  - c. reinstate a drivers license
  - d. renew vehicle registration
  - e. register or title a vehicle
  - f. other

A5. Now I'd like you to think of your last visit to the DMV and rate your satisfaction on that visit with each of those same attributes I listed earlier. This time, 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so. ROTATE

- a. When you walked in, it was easy to figure out where to go
- b. When you walked in, it was easy to figure out what forms to fill out
- c. The forms and paperwork were easy to complete
- d. It was a reasonable wait until you got to the counter
- e. Once you got to the counter, the transaction was completed in a timely manner
- f. The transaction was done accurately
- g. The person helping you was knowledgeable about the process
- h. The person helping you was respectful
- i. The person helping you was friendly

A6. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with that visit? Again, 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. MARK ON SCALE

**Section B: DMV , by phone, by mail, or online**

B1. You said you did business with the DMV within the last 6 months by phone, by mail and/or online. Which was it?

MARK ALL THAT APPLY. ASK B2-10 FOR PHONE, B11-14 FOR MAIL, B15-18 FOR ONLINE. ASK ALL THAT APPLY.

I'm going to ask you some questions about doing business with the DMV in that way. First I'll ask you to rate the importance of certain kinds of service. Then I'll ask you to rate your satisfaction with your most recent transaction.

**Phone**

B2. First, thinking in general about doing business with the DMV by phone, please rate how important each of the following is to you. 10 means extremely important and 1 means not at all important. If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so. ROTATE ORDER

- a. You are able to reach an operator if you need to.
- b. You wait a reasonable amount of time on hold.
- c. If you talk to an operator, that person is respectful.
- d. If you talk to an operator, that person is friendly.
- e. If you talk to an operator, that person is knowledgeable.
- f. You complete your transaction in a reasonable amount of time.

B3. What do you consider a reasonable amount of time to wait on hold? RECORD EXACT NUMBER OF MINUTES \_\_\_\_\_

B4. What do you consider a reasonable amount of time from the time you pick up the phone until you complete the entire transaction? RECORD EXACT MINUTES \_\_\_\_\_

B5. Thinking back to your recent phone transaction, did you receive the service you needed? YES/NO

B6. Did you ever speak to a person, or only listen to a recording? MARK ONE

- B7. If you listened to a recording, did you get the information necessary to complete your call?  
YES/NO
- B8. Which of the following is preferable to you, getting accurate information quickly via recorded message or waiting to speak to a person? MARK ONE CATEGORY  
(QUICKLY – or – SPEAK TO A PERSON)
- B9. Thinking of that particular phone transaction, please rate your satisfaction with each of those same attributes I listed earlier. This time, 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so.
- a. You were able to reach an operator if you needed to.
  - b. You waited a reasonable amount of time on hold.
  - c. The operator you talked to was respectful. (INCLUDE CODE FOR "NOT APPLICABLE") IF B6=NO CONTACT, SKIP
  - d. The operator you talked to was friendly. (INCLUDE CODE FOR "NOT APPLICABLE") IF B6=NO CONTACT, SKIP
  - e. The operator you talked to was knowledgeable. (INCLUDE NOT APPLICABLE) IF B6=NO CONTACT, SKIP
  - f. You completed your transaction in a reasonable amount of time.
- B10. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with that phone transaction? Again, 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. MARK ON SCALE

**Mail**

- B11. I'm going to read a list of factors, and I'd like you to rate how important each one is to you when doing business with the DMV by mail. 10 means extremely important and 1 means not at all important. ROTATE ORDER If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so.
- a. You receive a notice far enough in advance of needing to act.
  - b. The forms and paperwork are easy to understand and to complete.
  - c. The transaction is completed promptly.
  - d. The transaction is completed accurately.
- B12. What was the purpose of your most recent mail transaction with the DMV? MARK CATEGORY
- a. renew vehicle registration
  - b. title a new vehicle
  - c. other
- B13. Thinking of that mail transaction, please rate your satisfaction with each of those same attributes I listed earlier. This time, 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so.  
ROTATE
- a. You received a notice far enough in advance of needing to act.
  - b. The forms and paperwork were easy to understand and to complete.
  - c. The transaction was completed promptly.
  - d. The transaction was completed accurately.



B14. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with that mail transaction? Again, 1 means extremely satisfied and 10 means not at all satisfied. MARK ON SCALE

**Online**

B15. I'm going to read a list of factors, and I'd like you to rate how important each one is to you when doing business with the DMV online. 10 means extremely important and 1 means not at all important. If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so. ROTATE ORDER

- a. The Web site is easy to navigate.
- b. The Web site has the type information you were looking for.
- c. The Web site information is current and up-to-date.

B16. What was the purpose of your most recent online contact with the DMV? MARK ALL

- a. renew vehicle registration
- b. schedule a road test
- c. download forms
- d. get information about regulations or procedures
- e. check hours or location of DMV office
- f. other

B17. Thinking of that online transaction, please rate your satisfaction with each of those same attributes I listed earlier. This time, 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so.

ROTATE ORDER

- a. The Web site was easy to navigate.
- b. The Web site had the type information you were looking for.
- c. The Web site information was current and up-to-date.

B18. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with that online transaction? Again, 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. MARK ON SCALE

**Section C: Traffic and road construction**

C1. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the traffic and road construction service provided by the Department of Transportation? Again, 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. MARK ON SCALE

I'm going to ask you some questions about traffic and road construction on state highways. First I'll ask you to rate the importance of certain things, and then I'll ask you to rate your satisfaction with your most recent experience.

C2. I'm going to read a list of factors, and I'd like you to rate how important each one is to you when encountering construction while driving on a state highway. Remember we are talking about state highways, not city or county roads. We'll use a 10-point scale, where 10 means extremely important and 1 means not at all important. If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so. ROTATE ORDER

- a. Signs announcing road closings and detours are kept up to date

- b. Detour routes are clearly marked and easy to follow
- c. Signs about road closings and detours are posted far enough down the road that you can change your route
- d. Road closings and detours are announced to the public in advance
- e. When access to a store or business is affected, there are clear signs directing customers
- f. You see continuous progress
- g. The work site always looks busy during normal work hours
- h. Good clean-up when the job is complete
- i. Traffic laws are adequately enforced in construction zone
- j. The job is done in a reasonable amount of time
- k. The finished job is an improvement over what was there before
- l. Driver safety is protected by appropriate measures such as reduced speed limits, lane closures, etc.
- m. Road workers' safety is protected by appropriate measures such as reduced speed limits, lane closures, etc.

C3. Now I'd like you to think of your last encounter with construction on a state highway and rate your satisfaction with each of those same attributes. This time, 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so. ROTATE ORDER

- a. Signs announcing road closings and detours were up to date
- b. Detour signs were clearly marked and easy to follow
- c. Signs about road closings and detours were posted far enough down the road that you could change your route
- d. Road closings and detours were announced to the public in advance
- e. If access to a store or business was affected, there were clear signs directing customers
- f. Continuous progress was observed
- g. The work site looked busy during normal work hours
- h. Good cleanup observed when job was complete
- i. Traffic laws were being enforced in the construction zone
- j. Job was done in a reasonable amount of time
- k. The finished job was an improvement over what was there before
- l. Driver safety was protected by appropriate measures such as reduced speed limits, lane closures, etc.
- m. Road workers' safety was protected by appropriate measures such as reduced speed limits, lane closures, etc.

C4. Thinking about how the state spends its money on road construction, how would you rate your satisfaction with Wisconsin's performance on the following. Again, 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. ROTATE ORDER

- a. Spending money on improvements that are truly needed
- b. Doing it right the first time
- c. Doing the work cost efficiently

C5. I'm going to ask you to rate the importance of two things, which of the following is most important? MARK ONE

- a. Making it easy to navigate through construction zones and detours

b. Enforcing speed limits and other traffic rules in construction zones

**Section D: Motorist assistance**

I'm going to ask you some questions about receiving assistance from the State Patrol. First I'll ask you to rate the importance of certain attributes, and then I'll ask you to rate your satisfaction with your most recent experience.

D1. I'm going to read a list of factors, and I'd like you to rate how important each one is to you when you receive roadside assistance from the State Patrol. We'll use a 10-point scale, where 10 means extremely important and 1 means not at all important. If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so. ROTATE ORDER

- a. The State Trooper treats you with respect.
- b. You wait a reasonable amount of time for help.
- c. You can easily identify the person who approaches you as a Wisconsin State Trooper.
- d. The State Trooper makes a special effort to help with your problem.

D2. You said you had received assistance from the State Patrol in the last 6 months. Did the State Trooper help to solve your problem? YES/NO

D3. Thinking of that occasion, please rate your satisfaction with each of those same attributes I listed earlier. This time, 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so. ROTATE ORDER

- a. The State Trooper treated you with respect.
- b. You waited a reasonable amount of time for help.
- c. You could easily identify the person who approached you as a Wisconsin State Trooper.
- d. The State Trooper made a special effort to help with your problem.

D4. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the State Trooper's performance? Again, 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. MARK ON SCALE

**Section E: Traffic violation stop**

I'm going to ask you some questions about being stopped for a traffic violation. First I'll ask you to rate the importance of certain ways of handling it, and then I'll ask you to rate your satisfaction with your most recent experience.

E1. First please rate how important it is to you that each of the following happens when the State Patrol pulls someone over. We'll use a 10-point scale, where 10 means extremely important and 1 means not at all important. If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so. ROTATE ORDER

- a. You can easily identify the person who approaches you as a Wisconsin State Trooper.
- b. The State Trooper explains why you were pulled over.
- c. You are stopped for a fair reason.
- d. You receive clear instructions of what to do, for example, whether to stay in the car or get out.
- e. The State Trooper treats you with respect.

- f. The State Trooper behaves professionally.
- g. The State Trooper listens to your side of the story.
- h. The State Trooper doesn't bully or try to intimidate you.
- i. The entire interaction takes a reasonable amount of time.

E2. You said you had been stopped by the State Patrol in the last 6 months. Were you issued a warning, a citation, or arrested?

MARK ONE

E3. Thinking of that occasion, please rate your satisfaction with each of those same attributes I listed earlier. This time, 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so. ROTATE ORDER

- a. You could easily identify the person who approaches you as a Wisconsin State Trooper.
- b. The State Trooper explained why you were pulled over.
- c. You were stopped for a fair reason.
- d. You received clear instructions of what to do, for example, whether to stay in the car or get out.
- e. The State Trooper treated you with respect.
- f. The State Trooper behaved professionally.
- g. The State Trooper listened to your side of the story.
- h. The State Trooper didn't bully or try to intimidate you.
- i. The entire interaction took a reasonable amount of time.

E4. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the State Trooper's performance? Again, 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. MARK ON

SCALE

#### **Section F. Property owners and community residents affected by highway expansion**

F1. You said your property, or property in your community, had been affected by state highway construction in the last 6 months. Which of the following best describes your situation? MARK ALL THAT APPLY

- a. Your entire property was purchased
- b. Part of your property was purchased
- c. Your property was dug up or driven over
- d. Access to your property or utility service was disrupted
- e. Your community was affected by a new, expanded, or resurfaced highway

I'm going to ask you some questions about your experience with state highway construction. First I'll ask you to rate the importance of certain things happening, and then I'll ask you to rate your satisfaction with your most recent experience.

F2. First please rate how important it is for DOT to do each of the following when planning to construct a new highway or expand or improve an existing state highway. We'll use a 10-point scale where 10 means very important and 1 means not at all important. If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so. ROTATE ORDER

- a. Involve local residents in decision making
- b. Involve local government in decision making
- c. Accommodate community wishes and concerns
- d. Justify the proposed budget to local residents
- e. Justify the need for the planned improvements
- f. Maintain access to driveways and businesses
- g. Restore any damage to adjoining property

F3. Now please think of your own particular experience with the recent construction that affected your community. Please rate your satisfaction with how DOT did each of the following. We'll use a 10-point scale where 10 means very satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so.

ROTATE

- a. Involved local residents in decision making
- b. Involved local government in decision making
- c. Accommodated community wishes and concerns
- d. Justified the proposed budget to local residents
- e. Justified the need for the planned improvements
- f. Maintained access to driveways and businesses
- g. Restored any damage to adjoining property

**IF PERSON ONLY ANSWERED THAT THEIR COMMUNITY WAS AFFECTED IN F1, ASK Q4., AND THEN SKIP TO SECTION G**

F4. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the experience? Again, 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. MARK ON SCALE [SKIP TO SECTION G]

I'm going to ask you some questions about how DOT deals with the owners of property affected by state highway construction. First I'll ask you to rate the importance of doing certain things, then I'll ask you to rate your satisfaction with how those things were handled in your recent experience.

F5. First please rate how important each of the following is to you. We'll use a 10-point scale, where 10 means extremely important and 1 means not at all important. If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so. ROTATE ORDER

- a. Information about how the project would affect you is delivered far enough in advance.
- b. You are contacted in an appropriate way, whether by phone, by mail or in person.
- c. Your situation is evaluated individually.
- d. You have the opportunity to negotiate with DOT.
- e. Your concerns are addressed.
- f. You receive fair accommodation.
- g. DOT does what it promises.
- h. You are given an accurate prediction of the project timeline.

F6. Now, thinking of your recent experience with your own property, please rate your satisfaction with each of those same attributes. This time, 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. If you don't know or the question doesn't apply, just say so. ROTATE ORDER

- a. Information about how the project would affect you was delivered far enough in advance.
- b. You were contacted in an appropriate way, whether by phone, by mail or in person.
- c. Your situation was evaluated individually.
- d. You had the opportunity to negotiate with DOT.
- e. Your concerns were addressed.
- f. You received fair accommodation.
- g. DOT did what it promised.
- h. You were given an accurate prediction of the project timeline.

F7. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the experience? Again, 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. MARK ON SCALE

### **G. Questions for everyone**

G5. In general, compared to interstate and state highways you have traveled on in other states, would you say Wisconsin highways overall are better than others, about the same, or not as good as others? If you don't know, then say so. MARK ON SCALE

G5a. If 'not as good as others' ASK: Which state(s) have you driven through with better roads than Wisconsin?

I've got a few final questions for you –

G6. Have you gone online to access the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Website? YES/NO (IF B1=3, SKIP to Z1, and if NO, skip to Z1)

G7. If yes, what was the purpose of your most recent online contact with WisDOT? (MARK ALL)

- a. Download forms
- b. Get information about road conditions
- c. Check hours or locations for DMV office
- d. Schedule a road test
- e. Renew vehicle registration
- f. Get information about regulations or procedures
- g. Other

G8. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with that on-line transaction? Again we will use a 10-point scale where 10 means extremely satisfied and 1 means not at all satisfied. MARK ON SCALE

### **Demographics**

Z1. Code gender MARK ONE

Z2. Which category matches your age? MARK ONE

- 18–24.....1
- 25–34.....2
- 35–44.....3
- 45–54.....4

55–64 .....	5
65+ .....	6
DK/Refused (Don't offer.) .....	99

Z3. Which category matches your racial background? MARK ONE

- Black
- White
- Hispanic
- Asian
- Native American
- Other
- DK/Refused

Z4. Thinking of where you live, do you consider it an urban, suburban or rural area?

MARK ONE

Z5. What is your zip code? \_\_\_\_\_

Thanks for your time. Your answers will be compiled with other surveys we conduct around the state and the findings will be used by the DOT to improve service to customers. For quality control, my supervisor may contact you to check on my courtesy and accuracy. May I get your first name? \_\_\_\_\_ And let me verify that this phone number is \_\_\_\_\_. Thanks again. Goodbye.



## **Appendix 2B:**

### **Focus Group Detailed Findings**

**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
DEPARTMENT-WIDE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION MECHANISM  
FOCUS GROUP REPORT**

### **Purpose and Methodology**

As part of a large study conducted for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) by Virchow Krause & Company (VK), subcontractor Chamberlain Research Consultants, Inc. (CRC) conducted four focus groups with state residents to assess their criteria for satisfaction with DOT. This focus group report is submitted in partial fulfillment of Phase 3 of this study.

Participants were recruited by CRC telephone interviewers from a list of licensed drivers supplied by DOT. They were screened to have had at least one of the following types of interaction with DOT in the last six months: vehicle title or registration, driver's licensing, motorist assistance, traffic enforcement, property owner affected by state highway construction, or driving through state highway construction.

Two groups were composed of people who lived in rural areas and two groups were composed of people from urban and suburban areas. A total of 50 people participated, including one person who was unable to participate in the Appleton rural group and who was interviewed later by telephone. The groups were held July 8-10, 2002 in Appleton, Madison, and Milwaukee. Participants were paid a \$50 cash honorarium as a thank-you for attending. Each group was moderated by an experienced CRC moderator, either Sharon Chamberlain, CRC President, or Tyler Walker, CRC Director of Field Research.

This qualitative study was conducted to guide development of a quantitative customer satisfaction survey instrument, as part of Phase 3. Focus group findings are not statistically representative or projectable to the larger population.

### **Incidence of DOT interaction**

In recruiting the focus groups, CRC worked from lists of licensed drivers. DOT was unable to provide lists of drivers who met the various requirements. As expected, it was easiest to find drivers who had recently visited the DMV or driven in road construction. It was hardest to find individuals who had been stopped or assisted by the State Patrol or who owned property affected by state road construction. For the purposes of tracking customer satisfaction with DOT services, it will be helpful for divisions to maintain transaction records in a format that can be used by survey managers without violating drivers' privacy.

### **Differences among groups**

The urban groups were more conversant about the impact of road construction upon driving than upon personal property or the community as a whole. Participants in rural groups were naturally more likely to have experienced a highway construction or expansion in their area than were urban residents, who only see expansion of existing roads. Group 1 (Rural Madison) was made up of people currently living in the middle of Highway 92 expansion, so they were particularly conversant on how construction affects a community, but not necessarily as property owners. Group 4 (Urban Appleton) had some participants who were very unhappy with highways (15 and 441) that directly affected property or businesses they owned. Group 2 (Rural Appleton) had a few property owners affected by Highway 10; even the least satisfied were not as unhappy as those in Group 4. Group 3 (Urban Milwaukee) had no affected property owners.

Group 4 had several mothers of teenage new drivers and was the only group to discuss new driver licensing. Group 3 was the only group to talk about reducing the license renewal period for older drivers. Groups 2 and 4 discussed DMV fees at length.

## Key Findings

1. The top-of-mind association with the Department of Transportation for most focus group participants was the **Division of Motor Vehicles**, specifically office visits. **State Patrol** (specifically being stopped by state troopers) and **road construction** (specifically the inconvenience of road construction on drivers) were nearly as highly associated.
2. **Road quality** and **traffic safety** were the tasks the participants wanted DOT to put as its highest priority. Road quality included intelligent planning and timely construction. Traffic safety included regulating drivers (repeated DUIs and driving with a suspended license were particularly mentioned as offensive) and enforcing rules in construction zones (they supported doubling fines).
3. The participants felt that DOT does a good job with **keeping roads in good repair** (at least as good as other states, some say better). The **state troopers** are generally respected and trusted. **Renewing vehicle registration** by mail is appreciated. Drivers who have lived in other states praised Wisconsin's DMV offices, but others had mixed feelings about their efficiency, partly based on which offices they usually visit.
4. The most common complaints about DOT were about long waits and surly clerks at the **DMV office** and about inconveniences associated with **road construction**, such as detours, inadequate signage, and drivers who don't drive safely in the zone.
5. The most important factors in making a **visit to the DMV office** satisfactory were:
  - Short waiting time (plenty of desk clerks, lines keep moving, 20 minutes maximum wait)
  - Courteous, professional attitude from clerks
  - Clear instructions (where to go, what forms to complete)
6. The most important factors in making an **interaction with a state trooper** satisfactory were:
  - The trooper has a respectful, professional attitude
  - Confidence that the person who pulled you over is a trooper, not an imposter
  - For motorists in distress, help arrives quickly and stays until the problem is solved
  - For traffic violations, the trooper listens to you and "gives you a break"
  - For traffic violations, the interaction takes a reasonable amount of time
7. The most important factors in making the **impact of road construction on a community** satisfactory were:
  - Justify the need for proposed improvements
  - Involve local residents and local government in decision making
  - Accommodate community wishes and concerns
  - Justify the proposed budget
  - Provide an accurate schedule in advance
  - Keep roads safe and easy to travel
  - Minimize impact on local businesses

8. The most important factors in making the **impact of road construction on a property owner** satisfactory were:
  - Pay a fair price for land, inconvenience, and loss of use
  - Give plenty of notice and don't keep changing the plan
  - Do not hinder access to businesses with construction or permanent changes
  - Promptly clean up debris and repair any damage to landscaping, etc.
9. The most important factors in making the **impact of road construction on drivers** satisfactory were:
  - Visible progress and prompt completion
  - Traffic safety (catch line-jumpers and speeders, impose double fines)
  - Clear signage (far enough down the road, offer alternatives, keep current)
10. The **preferred way to communicate** with DOT depended on the subject and direction. Personal information from DOT (renewals, expirations, etc.) by mail were well-received. Some suggested that other information could come in the same envelope (pie charts of DOT budget, tips on what to do in an accident, explanations of how to recognize an authentic state trooper, updates on new traffic laws). When participants seek information, they are most likely to call, and they'd prefer to be able to reach a human operator if they can't quickly find a recorded answer. A few were aware of the road conditions hotline. Few had visited the DOT Web site, but many do other research on-line, so use is likely to increase. Those who had looked at the road conditions report said it was difficult to use and should incorporate maps.
11. The participants were unable to offer helpful suggestions about **how to measure customer satisfaction**, other than to suggest focus groups and surveys. Some were aware that the DMV already surveys office patrons, and one person reported encountering an in-person survey in the middle of road construction. None seemed aware of any other survey conducted by DOT.
12. They didn't seem to have a strong need to see **how DOT spends taxpayer funds** or much concern about whether DOT sets priorities that coincide with their own. They saw this as too big a subject for them to have an informed opinion. They simply wanted to feel confident that DOT was as efficient as possible in building roads, staffing offices and handling paperwork. They were angered when they saw evidence of inefficiency in the DMV office or in road construction, and some were irritated when fees increased without an accompanying improvement in service quality.

## **DOT FOCUS GROUP #1 DETAILED FINDINGS RURAL (MADISON)**

### **Participants**

There were 13 participants, seven men and six women, representing a mix of ages. All were from rural communities outside Madison. They were asked to introduce themselves and describe their most recent interaction with the state Department of Transportation. Six were from Brooklyn and named the construction in Highway 92 as their most recent interaction with DOT. The participants were:

Bonnie, Brooklyn  
Robert, Black Earth, retired farmer, serves on town board  
Chuck, Springfield Hill, recently returned after 25 years in New Jersey  
John, Belleville, was on town board, now on planning commission, retired farmer  
Marie, Mt. Horeb, retired dairy farmer  
Kelly, Brooklyn, stay-at-home mom with young child  
Diane, Brooklyn  
Walt, east of Dane, retired dairy farmer and machinist  
Angie, Brooklyn, teaches chemistry, single, lives with parents  
Judy, Mt. Horeb, works in a lab at UW  
Elizabeth, Cambridge, works at home as French teacher  
Mert, Brooklyn  
Kevin, Brooklyn, retired Air Force, now at state workforce development center

Five said their most recent contact with DOT was driving through the construction of Highway 92, and four said it was a visit to the DMV office for a driver's license vehicle registration. One said his most recent contact was getting a speeding ticket. Two had personal experiences regarding highway construction: Elizabeth said she had worked against the Highway 12 project in Cambridge, and Walt said he had sold land for right of way "for an unnecessary road improvement." Besides renewing his license, Robert had, in his role on the town board, interacted with DOT about installing stop signs near railroad crossings on Highway 14.

### **Perception of DOT**

The moderator asked the participants to describe what the Department of Transportation does. The first comments all reflected the Brooklyn residents' concern with road construction: "Blocks the roads in summertime!" "Throws away our money!" "They love to build bigger, better, wider roads so trucks can go faster." "— and, hopefully, safer!"

The moderator probed for other DOT responsibilities. They listed driver's licenses, titles for cars, commuter rail, rest areas on highways, law enforcement. Then, there was a long silence, and someone mentioned "back-up PR for all those things." She mentioned the DOT's Web site and referred to a marketing budget used to "portray a positive image of themselves to the degree possible." Another participant mentioned that "State Patrol is always there to help" a motorist in difficulty.

The moderator asked which of these functions was the most important. One said it was the Division of Motor Vehicles—all the licensing, registration, and recordkeeping.

Another said it was the repair and upkeep of the highways, and everyone else in the room agreed with him.

The DOT's top priority, one said, should be "their constituency, the residents of Wisconsin and those passing through." When asked how DOT should serve drivers, the participants answered, "talk to them," and "keep them safe." When pressed to define safety, they listed:

"Setting accurate speed limits for construction zones and enforcing those limits."

"Keeping the roads in one piece."

"Keep them well marked."

One participant returned to the question about DOT's constituency and said that DOT "owes something to the taxpayers. They need to do whatever they do economically. You can look at all the good things they do on the roads, etc., but many people are concerned about how economically they do that. Do they over plan projects and just encourage more traffic?"

The moderator pressed them for examples of things the DOT does well. Many agreed that the road markings and signage are good—better than they used to be, and better than other states. The roads themselves are well maintained, according to some. One who lived in New Jersey said Wisconsin's vehicle registration system was wonderful in comparison. Another agreed that he liked being able to renew registration by phone. A participant who lived next to a state highway project said he was "very pleased with the process we went through, taking care of the land, the temporary inconvenience." Another Brooklyn resident agreed that the advance notice of what would happen during the project was handled well. The Cambridge resident who had fought the Highway 12 project admitted that, even though she didn't agree with the expansion, "the DOT was very forthcoming with their public information, public meetings, public input, they took absolutely everything into account, and they actually changed things as a result."

### **Community Affected by Road Construction**

The moderator asked the group to list the factors that contribute to whether or not a road construction project is a good experience for them.

"Communication."

"Knowing in advance what is going on—whether you'll have power outages or water shut off."

"Good mapping."

"As homeowners, what is the payoff to us for use of our property or destroying flowers or shrubs? Also, I'm in an area that's getting a new sidewalk, so that's another benefit to us."

"That's kind of a double-edged sword, though. [In Cambridge,] despite the fact that we were listened to and plans were adjusted, the outcome was still to accommodate more traffic, and it was stressed that this was going to happen [regardless of our objections]."

“Supervision of the contractors... It goes smoother, saves money and people will be more satisfied.”

“Planning. Pennsylvania did a very poor job of building I-80. Soon after it was built, it was being re-done, and it’s been re-done every year since then. There’s a large component of making sure it comes up to design code.”

“Taking into account the economic viability during construction of the region affected.”

“Ease of access for local businesses and their customers. Keeping businesses open.”

“Long-range planning. Like they’ve got a real bottleneck between Cross Plains and Black Earth. Now that they’ve got all the houses built, there’s no way to get around it or through it. In Sauk City, they’re building two bridges, but it’s going to come back down to two lanes, and where are the cars going to go?”

The moderator led the group through a discussion of each of these areas in turn (see underlined headings below), and asked them how each could be done best.

Communication – The first thing that should happen is notification to area residents as far in advance as possible—some suggested five years was reasonable and feasible, others said two years was enough. The participant who currently serves on a town board said the next step should be to start working with local officials; he said his board had not known about construction plans until quite late. Another participant suggested monthly updates. The Cambridge activist said, in her experience, the residents had received newsletters, and there were frequent public meetings. A Brooklyn resident said DOT could update the Brooklyn board, who, in turn, could include the information in its monthly newsletter. Residents want to know what will happen in the coming month. A few gave examples of information they would like to have:

“When they were ripping up the other side of town, they were doing sewer, so when they started ripping up my street, I thought it was sewer. But they were doing gas lines on my side of town and then flip-flopped [did my sewer at the same time as gas lines on the other side of town].”

“I want to know when they’re doing what. If they’re ripping up Church Street, I want to know when and for how long, so I can go away...” [Later in the discussion, the same participant added:] “I’d like to see big maps showing the progress for the whole project, somewhere that you could stop in and look at it.”

A Brooklyn resident complimented DOT for their approach to the Highway 92 project:

“They approached it as a positive thing; they didn’t say, ‘We’re coming in and we’re doing this.’ They asked for input and feedback, and gave plenty of notice of meetings. They approached it as an improvement for the whole community, not just re-doing the highway.”

The Cambridge activist said:

“I’d like to back up a little bit. This whole discussion is assuming that there’s already a project planned that somebody somewhere has determined a need for.



[Communication is needed] when they're at the stage of determining the need for the project. Why and why not? A public opinion survey at the level of their planning—that would happen many years out. They say putting a bypass around Cambridge would take 20 years. There should be public input in the early, early stages.”

The moderator prompted the group about signs, which they agreed were an important part of communication. Signs and flagmen should be in place for detours. A Brooklyn resident noted, “It would be more important if we were being re-routed by ten miles or something. The inconvenience to us has been very minimal and temporary.” Other Brooklynites nodded in agreement.

If all these communication steps were taken, participants said, they would feel empowered, happy, involved, “more willing to work with them—your attitude’s better because you feel better,” and “like your tax dollars are really working.”

Compensation – One whose property was affected by construction, and who had been very satisfied with the way it was handled, described his experience, and another participant nodded throughout. Others followed with their thoughts. The moderator probed for how they felt about their experiences and what was important.

“One-on-one contact is how we did it, because we weren’t satisfied with what they had in mind. They came right out and got on-line, looked at one of the flower places, and got the prices right off the Internet. There was no argument.”

“Each landowner should ask to be valued separately. From one end of town to the other, your values are going to change.”

“It needs to be fair.”

“There should be room for negotiation.”

“We were very pleased with how it went. She came at a time that was convenient for both me and my husband so we could both be there. She explained where their figures came from for the price they offered. We said that wasn’t acceptable to us, so she gave us time to come up with a different figure, and she accepted our offer. It was very timely.”

“I felt good dealing with her, like the process worked.”

“They gave my husband a chance to build his own sidewalk to save on the taxes. They said, ‘You do it, and we’ll tell you how to do it to code.’ He was happy to have the choice.”

Outcomes – The moderator reminded the group of some outcomes they had mentioned already, such as sidewalks, better traffic flow so they could get to work faster, and remediation of ongoing flooding problems in one participant’s backyard, which had been caused by roadwork done many years earlier. She asked for other desirable outcomes of road construction. A young man said, “I’m looking for a smoother ride.”

Planning/Oversight/Efficiency – Walt, who lived near the town of Dane, complained about poor planning:

“They built two roads in the same place in three years, and I’m mad about it. In the last 15 or 20 years, there have been public hearings for relocating the route of Highway 113 by a mile, and it had been decided not to do it. So, they wasted a lot of money reconstructing the old road, and then, three years later, they decided to move it to a mile away where they had wanted before. It was just a waste of what they had done. Then, they tore out some new pavement and curb that they’d put in three years ago and put it back the same way, except they changed the grade about two or three inches in front of my driveway, and it didn’t make any difference, because that was now a town road. They wasted a lot of money, about a half million dollars, on that intersection.”

All agreed they wanted to know that the construction being done was carefully planned and would not be replaced in a few years. The Cambridge activist referred to Walt’s comment, saying, “Here’s someone who has been living in the location for decades and probably has something to contribute at the early stages, versus the engineering graduate who is very eager to get started on his project and knows zero about the location... Locals know if something needs to be graded or not.” She and others agreed they would feel better about a project knowing that the long-term residents had had input.

The participants agreed that they wanted money to be spent efficiently. One wanted “very clear budget diagramming, showing where they’re getting the money, what they’re spending, why they need to spend that much. The two-year budget process suggests that if they don’t spend it right away, it’s gone.” Another asked, “Do they get bids from two or three contractors, rather than just one they’ve used before?” Another replied, “If you pick the cheapest one, you wonder, will they be able to get the job done as well?” She wanted the job to go to the best bidder, one “who knows what they’re talking about.” There was some discussion about whether DOT is required to take the lowest bid, but none seemed to know for sure. One said, “They *should* disqualify contractors who don’t meet the contract specifications, but they don’t.”

They like the idea of DOT sharing information about oversight of the project. One said, “Don’t be afraid to tell us what went wrong... We want to hear the good and the bad.”

Keeping businesses alive – This includes signage and communication, especially with respect to detours. One participant referred to a detour on Highway 23 outside Greenburg that was hard to follow, especially for large trucks which got stuck in tight turns on county roads and blocked the road. He said announcements should be made on the radio, and maps should be made available. Signs should be kept current, said another: “You see a sign that says ‘Road closed 6 miles,’ and you don’t know whether to believe it. I’ve gone a lot of times and you can get through, but another time, you get right up to it and the bridge is out. Signs could say ‘Road *may be* closed’.” Another added, “They need to go pick up the signs they left there six months ago.”

One participant suggested public service announcements in collaboration with the local Chamber of Commerce that could say, for example, “If you want to go to Cambridge and buy pottery, go this way.” Radio, TV, and newspaper coverage would help, too, she said, “It’s newsworthy to know that you’re going to have a hard time getting someplace.”

Road safety – Toward the end of the focus group, the moderator brought up road construction again, probing for their feelings about safety and traffic management in construction zones. She asked what made them mad; each example was met with general agreement.

“When safety is not accounted for. Access from East Washington Street [in Madison] to the Interstate was extremely dangerous.”

“When you start merging and you’re getting over where you belong, and then here comes a whole line of smart alecks to run you off.”

“The radio stations are usually pretty good about what’s going on... They had a lane closed... It was backed up and there was a whole line of people in the left lane still driving up just to get five cars ahead. It makes you want to ram them.”

“I’ve seen it some places where they put a policeman there [to prevent line jumping].”

They agreed that Wisconsin does a good job of posting signs that are helpful and far enough down the road from the construction. They also appreciate good notification by the media. Radio was the most popular way to find out about construction delays. Only one in the group, a young man, goes on-line to get information, and he said the Web site is not always up to date. Another said her husband used the DOT Web site and found it easy to use. An older man, who used to drive a lot near Milwaukee, had tuned in to a special radio frequency for traffic bulletins on Highway 100 and found it very helpful. A woman liked radio stations that encouraged listeners to call in and report traffic delays; she appreciated the early notification. One man suggested that signs announcing road construction should be placed before the previous exit so people could get off and choose a different route. Others agreed. One had seen a “poster” in Lodi describing an alternate route.

The participants said the criteria for measuring satisfaction with road construction were good signage, prompt completion, safety, and cleaning up “so you don’t get a flat tire.”

The moderator asked how the participants felt about fines being doubled in construction zones. All said it was a good idea, but one participant said those areas weren’t patrolled: “People go whipping through there! I slow down just to bug ’em. They should patrol those areas *all the time*. I had a [road worker] friend who was hit.” One knew of a construction site where the rules were strictly enforced, and he felt it made things go more smoothly. One participant asked whether the fines were doubled only when workers were present, or 24 hours a day. Others agreed that this was a good question. She went on to say that, if the reduced speed limit was set, not only to protect the workers, but also to protect drivers on a difficult stretch of road, that was a good thing and should be made clear. Otherwise, people were likely to assume the goal was only to protect workers, and they could speed up at other times.

One participant wished more work was done at night to reduce impact on traffic. Others told her this would be more expensive, but she felt day workers could simply be told their shifts were being changed. The moderator asked which they would want the DOT to choose: less inconvenience to drivers or lower cost. One said there were too many variables to make a flat judgment: “On the Beltline, they had to work round the clock or they’d never get it done. On a smaller road like 92, they didn’t need to [increase the cost

by working at night].” Others came down on both sides of the issue, with some feeling the cost of night work was prohibitive, and others feeling that easing traffic disruption would be worth the cost.

### **Division of Motor Vehicles**

About half the group had been to the DMV office in the last year or so. The others said they handle most business by mail.

A few had complaints about their interaction with DMV staff. One had to “wait for two people to quit talking to each other” and ignoring people in line. One participant said of the clerks, “They are not very happy people there.” The group listed the following descriptions of how they wanted DMV staff to behave: professional, courteous, ready to help people, efficient, knowledgeable.

They also mentioned other areas where DMV could improve service.

One wished DMV would “eliminate half the paperwork.” Others agreed, and one sighed, “Oh yes, but that’s the government.”

One wanted DMV to “stop raising the prices of everything.” Others joked, “But they have to pay for the road construction.” One said offering more DMV offices and longer hours led to cost increases.

All would like shorter waiting time. One suggested that could be addressed by having “more little areas like at Westgate where you just go for simple stuff.” Some liked the “quick kiosks,” but others disagreed and felt “big open areas” were more efficient.

The moderator probed time, treatment, and knowledge in more depth (see underlined headings below).

Time - The moderator asked the participants to be specific about what amount of waiting was reasonable and what was too much. One said, two years, ago when she went in for a license renewal, she had waited 20 minutes before being served, and it took another 20 minutes to get her picture taken properly. She felt a 10-minute wait was reasonable, and the line should keep moving. Another had waited only five minutes, within the past month. A third spent 45 minutes, but expected that because she had gone at a busy time. She’d be willing to wait 20 minutes, and most of the rest agreed that 15 to 20 minutes was appropriate. An older man said, “Thirty minutes—take a newspaper.” He was concerned about overstaffing and wasting money, and made this suggestion: “They have a counter fee of \$5 when you go in. They could have another fee of \$10 for express service.” No one laughed, and several smiled and nodded. A young woman said, “That’s a good idea! I bet a lot of people would pay for that.” If offered the choice, half the group would wait in a longer line and pay \$5, and half would at least consider waiting in a shorter line and paying \$10. Working people and mothers with small children were most interested in the express lane. When a retired man said he had time to wait, another participant joked, “He’s looking for the \$2.50 line!” The man who had lived in New Jersey dismissed the whole discussion. There, he said, “If you got out in an hour, you were lucky, and if the person wasn’t totally rude to you, you were lucky.” A retired man said another way to reduce waiting time would be to have help for people who didn’t understand how to fill out forms.

Later, a participant suggested good signage that would help people to find the right window and to fill out forms correctly.

They said if they got their business completed within 20 minutes and dealt with helpful clerks, they would be happy, grateful, less stressed, and feel “like it’s going to be a great day.”

Treatment - Returning to the subject of how the desk clerks treat customers, one participant claimed that clerks who hear customers complaining sometimes purposely slow down. Another participant who works in customer service said that, at her job, “Our motto is ‘The customer is always right, even when he’s wrong.’ If [DMV clerks] had that attitude and always had a smile on their face, I think people would be happier with their experience at the DMV, even if they had to wait.”

A young man said, “Professionalism! I don’t care if they chat with each other, I don’t care if they don’t come running to the counter, I just want them to treat me professionally. Most of the time, they treat me like I’m a chore. [They show it in their] facial expression. Every time they have to do something away from the counter, they appear to be deliberately slow.” A participant with a friend who worked at DMV said desk clerks get burned out and should be rotated more frequently; another suggested using more part-time workers. A retired man suggested going earlier in the day, when the clerks are fresher. The young man replied, “The clerks at Wal-Mart aren’t grumpy at the end of the day.” A young woman said, “You can be tired and still be civil.” They described rudeness as evident in the tone of voice, facial expression, and in making the customer “feel stupid, like why didn’t you know this, or why didn’t you do this right?”

One man said a “language line” might be useful for non-English speakers. Several liked the idea of being able to call ahead for information. An older woman added, “And I don’t mean by tape recorder, either! That is a pain in the neck!” Another participant noted that these additional services would cost more, and the older woman dismissed that concern, saying, “Oh, well, that’s the way it goes.” Later, someone suggested having a sign language interpreter to help deaf customers.

The moderator asked how they would feel if they got good service, attentive help, friendly explanations, and courteous treatment. A middle aged man answered, “Surprised!” and the rest of the group burst into laughter. A retired man said it felt good to have a quick, efficient experience, “even if you’re not in a hurry.” A young woman said that when she is treated well, she feels “Great! It puts a smile on my face when somebody smiles at me.”

An older woman said some customers go in expecting to be inconvenienced, but she takes a positive attitude and hasn’t had a bad experience. A younger man disagreed, saying “going in with a smile” didn’t help.

Knowledgeable – The participants agreed that a clerk should be knowledgeable and familiar with current regulations. The participant with a friend in the DMV spoke in the clerks’ defense, explaining that there is a huge amount of red tape to be familiar with, and it changes frequently. She said customers should not be annoyed when a clerk has to look something up. Others said that was part of the job, and maybe more money should be budgeted for training. An older man said he never found a DMV clerk to be “not knowledgeable,” but others said they had.

The moderator asked which was most important: time, treatment, or knowledge? Nearly all agreed treatment was most important. Only one chose time; she uses on-line and mail services wherever possible, and would pay the extra fee for express service if it were available.

### **State Patrol**

When the moderator brought up this topic, many participants laughed, squirmed and rolled their eyes, expressing annoyance but not strong hostility. The strongest association with interacting with a state trooper was being pulled over for speeding. The moderator described being pulled over as accompanied by an “oops” feeling, and one participant, the youngest, disagreed. She said:

“Not so much ‘Oops, this is my fault.’ I was going 72 and was pulled over and told I was clocked at 81, and I got a speeding ticket. It was not so much ‘Oops’ as, ‘Why are you screwing me over?’ And I can’t do anything about it because it was State Patrol, and it doesn’t matter what I say.”

The moderator asked the group what could make the unpleasant experience of being pulled over the best experience possible in the circumstances. The youngest participant said, “Not getting the ticket,” and everyone laughed.

They wanted to be treated properly during a speeding stop. State troopers should be reasonable, professional, respectful, compassionate. (In an accident situation, they would want to be treated the same way, with respect and compassion.)

The participants wanted the experience not to take a lot of time. An older man said, “I know people headed for church or weddings and they never made it. There’s no reason, everything’s on the computer, why [so much] time to check?” A younger man said, “Don’t you think what they’re doing is trying to slow you down?” Some laughed and nodded in agreement that the inconvenience was punishment for speeding. Some said 10 or 15 minutes should be ample time for the officer to check the records and write a speeding ticket. Ten of the participants believed that speeding tickets could be handled faster than they are. They agreed that DUIs, accidents and other stops would naturally take longer.

One respondent said, “Everyone in Wisconsin seems to know that if you keep it to 10 mph over the speed limit, you won’t get a ticket, and after that you might.” This didn’t seem to be common knowledge among the others; an older man laughed, “I guess I better speed up!” The woman who made that comment said she believed the State Patrol had done a cost-benefit analysis and decided it wasn’t worth the time to stop speeders doing less than 10 mph over the limit. (She confessed to being “a reformed speeder” with three speeding tickets in two months, and said she had reformed after her third ticket and “I don’t want to tell you how much” in fines.) A younger man said, “If you only drive five miles over, the cops will pass you... Drive to the Dells, if you only go 70, you’ll get run over.” When the moderator took a vote, most felt the magic line was between five and ten miles over the limit. Older participants seemed to be more conservative than younger drivers, who seemed to take speeding for granted. An older woman said, in a shocked voice, that it was mostly women who speed, and the rest of the group laughed. An older man asked why, if the goal was to reduce speeding, “State Patrol officers in every state go 10 miles over the speed limit, even when they’re not chasing anybody... They should be setting the example.” Others agreed they had seen

patrol cars speeding; the reformed speeder pointed out, “If they were going the limit, they’d call attention to themselves.”

The moderator asked how they recognized the State Patrol. One said, “The car,” and a few others said, “You don’t know,” because many cars are unmarked. One joked that if you could read “State Patrol” on the car, you were too close. They agreed that state troopers are recognizable by their uniform, “a bronze shirt and cowboy hat.”

The moderator asked, “How do you want to feel when you drive away from a speeding stop?” The group laughed at the idea it could be a positive experience. One said after getting a ticket, he feels angry at himself. They agreed it was normal to feel angry at themselves, but ideally, they shouldn’t feel angry at the officer.

At least two had received roadside assistance by the State Patrol, and were appreciative. One described being helped when she broke down in winter with her baby in the car.

Some nodded in casual agreement with the statement that they appreciated knowing there was a safety net for motorists in distress. An older woman hesitated, “Right now it is more of a scary thing because you don’t know if they’re real.” Others showed no emotion; they either didn’t agree or were uncomfortable with the subject. One murmured, “When they get out of the car—[you recognize the uniform].” The older woman went on, “Lately, last year, this year, there’s a fear, are they really officers, can you trust them? Roll down your window, or do you dare? You don’t know if they’re the real thing or not.” A younger woman asked if State Patrol cars were always marked. All agreed that motorists had the right to ask an officer for identification before rolling the window down, but they also agreed they couldn’t detect false identification. They agreed with the moderator’s suggestion that there should be more public education in what an authentic ID looks like. They said they had heard about people impersonating officers to attack motorists. The youngest woman said she had been stopped by a man with no ID or uniform, although the incident turned out to be no danger. Another woman had been pulled over by “a weirdo” with a red light; she since has heard that real State Patrol officers have a specific pattern of lights that can be recognized. Some women agreed they felt more vulnerable at night. An older man noted that officers are at risk, too, since drivers could pull a gun on them when they come to help.

### **Advice to DOT**

The topic of the State Patrol was followed by a discussion of safety and traffic in construction zones (described at an earlier point in this summary). Then, the participants were asked to rank DOT’s overall performance, using a 10-point scale with 1 being terrible and 10 being excellent. The ratings ranged from 5 to 8, the median rating was 8, and the mean was 7.23.

Then, the participants were asked to rank five aspects of DOT in order of importance. Communication was mentioned as number one most often (by five of the participants), and road construction was mentioned as number one next most often (by three). The three other aspects, State Patrol, property owners, and road construction, were mentioned as number one by only one person each, with property owners tending to be toward the bottom of the list in most cases.

They were then asked to complete the sentence, “Of all the things DOT does, the most important to me is...” Safety was mentioned often. Their written answers were:

“Good communication (signs, notifications).”

“Knowing the roads are well marked and maintained.”

“Keeping the roads safe with good signage.”

“Communication in all aspects, from communicating with property owners and village residents about local projects, to general state road construction, to going to the DMV office.”

“Treat me how they would want to be treated, whether that’s with respect at the DMV, with safety in construction, or fairly by the State Patrol. I want to know the public is a priority and who they serve, not themselves.”

“Respect.”

“Having good, safe roads.”

“That the DOT *not* build bigger, better, more roads *unless* there is *every* good reason to do so and absolutely every effect (long and short term) has been considered, including viability and livability of communities and individuals affected.”

“To have safe roads.”

“Keeping roadways safe and trying to prevent accidents.”

“For drivers and workers in construction zones and patrolling these areas. Then, communication in all areas of this department.”

“Save time, speeding tickets. Keep traffic moving and safe.”

“Get the biggest bang for the buck—efficiency.”

The moderator asked them to offer parting advice to DOT for improving service. Their short answers:

“Treat people with respect.”

“Request community input as far in advance of road changes as possible.”

“Get consistent enforcement on roads shared by county and multiple towns.”

“Put a notice with your registration renewal announcing new traffic laws.”



Everyone liked this last idea and said they would read the notice. (“We’d be crazy not to!”) They believed there are a lot of changes to keep up with. Another respondent added to this suggestion:

“That would also be a good time to share information about what the state trooper’s uniform, the identification, and the flashing lights look like.”

## **DOT FOCUS GROUP #2 DETAILED FINDINGS RURAL (APPLETON)**

### **Participants**

There were 12 participants, seven men and five women, recruited from rural areas in the Fox Valley. They represented a range of ages, with about one-third of the group retired and about one-fourth raising children.

Len, Sherwood, works at Kimberly Clark in research  
Dennis, Larson, high school counselor  
Paul, Black Creek, road construction  
Mark, Larson, inside sales for welding company  
Tanya, Winchester, recently-retired quality manager  
Mary, retired  
Jay, Larson, recently-unemployed goldsmith  
Phil, Black Creek, barber  
Sandy, Black Creek, works at Kimberly Clark in research  
Heidi, works as school crossing guard and teacher's aide  
Virja, Dale, pastor  
Mike, Freemont, research engineer

### **Perception of DOT**

The moderator asked what DOT does. He probed for the DOT's most important responsibility.

"When I think of DOT, I think of all the roads they tear up in the busy season, and all the detours and construction. I don't like it."

"That's who you call when you have trouble with a car dealer."

"Road safety. My husband's a truck driver, and I'm a school crossing guard. I see a lot of different safety issues. We need people out there to be conscious of the road and what the regulations are, making sure the rules people don't understand are put out there so people know. There were things I found out as a crossing guard that I didn't know, that are there for the safety of children."

"Maintenance and future planning of highways, like Highway 10. Routing of traffic for lightening of loads and congestion around the cities."

"Makes you stand in line—I was just at the DMV a few weeks ago."

They said the top priority should be road safety and planning future road development. Planning should focus on reducing congestion and increasing ease of travel. One participant said he wanted to see his money used wisely.

An older man said people who have traveled in other states should appreciate the roads in Wisconsin. The moderator asked what else Wisconsin DOT does well. A mother said her local DMV office had a play area for children, and she appreciates that very much, since she takes her children with her everywhere. A younger woman said she appreciated the extension of the license period, so she doesn't have to renew as often.

An older man, the barber, said his elderly customers can renew their licenses for eight years, which he felt was too long for people in their eighties and nineties. The moderator asked for other areas needing improvement.

A woman said road detours can be confusing for people unfamiliar with the area, “You have no clue where you’re ending up.” She had lived in other states and felt Wisconsin was, “the worst state for road signs—you get one sign, and if you miss it, say you have a big truck beside you, you don’t get another chance.” She said this was true of signs in general and especially for construction detours. Another woman agreed, “It just tells you that you can’t use this road and doesn’t tell you how to get back to the road you left.” The first woman found this annoying, frustrating, and inconvenient.

Another participant complained that, “up in New London, they have three-way stops, but you don’t know which three ways. They even have two-and-a-half-way stops, depending of they’re going straight or turning. You don’t know who’s got right of way!” Another woman complained about stop signs with the notation of “no stop if turning right.”

### **Division of Motor Vehicles**

Seven had been to the DMV office in the last six months. They described their experiences:

“Not good. They’re snowed under. I’ve always had to wait an hour or more, sometimes two, whether it’s for a driver’s license or to renew plates. There’s no easy in and out, no matter when you go. They’ve got a good system—better than they had—where you take a number and wait for it to come up on the sign. My last time was... [a problem with a] title transfer [for a new pickup]... They said it would take a month or six weeks to get my title back! The time before that was to get stickers for my motorcycle and moped. Both took an hour or two.”

“Mine was just in and out, getting my driver’s license renewed. I waited maybe five minutes to get the eye test... I took a number, went to the counter, made the transaction. It was pretty much bing, bing through the system.”

“I’ve had problems with their customer service. The counter clerks seem very grouchy. I understand that they have a lot of problems with people during the day, but they shouldn’t take them out on the next customers. I went for license renewal. I walked in, took a number, and filled out the card. I didn’t fill out what I needed, and the clerk was snippy and sent me back to fill it out. She had a real attitude about it.” (Moderator: “*Did you have to go back to the end of the line?*”) “No, I came up when her line was empty... It’s kind of upsetting. I’m not there every day; I don’t know exactly what I’m doing.”

“You go in every few years... It may have changed since last time; there might be a new system. When you go take a number, don’t you have to read something and figure out what form to take? ...maybe there’s something you didn’t understand on the form, the way they asked the question.”

“They used to have someone sitting right by the push button machine for help. But last time I was in, there was nobody there.” [Another participant joked, “He was working at Wal-Mart!”]

“I haven’t had that experience at all. Every time I’ve gone, it’s been great. They’ve been very friendly, very nice. I even got serenaded one time by one of the clerks. I’m from Kansas, and he was very short, so he sang the Munchkin song from *Wizard of Oz*.”

“Oh, him, he’s a fun guy to work with. I’ll give him credit; he knows his business, and he’s always in a decent mood. He’s one of the few that are.”

“I had to get a plate renewal. I went in at 9:00, and it took me about 15 minutes, in and out, very quick. I agree, though, when they had that person sitting up front, he had you fill out your forms and then get your number... That made it a little longer... I could fill it out while I’m waiting in line.”

“I won’t even go to Appleton anymore, because they keep you waiting so long, and they aren’t very friendly. In Oshkosh the lines are a lot shorter, and the people seem—well, they’re not under the pressure they are in Appleton. Also, in New London, they had the little satellite group that would go there one day a week... but they’re shutting a lot of those down. That was nice to have, even if it was only Monday afternoons from 2:00 to 4:00.”

“I lost my driver’s license a few weeks ago and went in for a replacement. I tried to go on my lunch hour. When I took a number, it said 21 minutes, but I waited 40 minutes. The people were nice, though... I didn’t really expect to get in and out in a normal lunch break.”

The moderator asked the participants to rate their most recent visit to the DMV office, using a scale of 1-10, with 1 being a terrible experience and 10 being a wonderful experience. Ratings ranged from 3 to 8, with a median of 7 and a mean of 6.25.

The moderator asked the group to describe a positive DMV office experience.

“The last time I went was two years ago. I didn’t have any problems. I took a number and had to sit and wait. I wasn’t in a big hurry, and I love to people watch, and we got some good laughs. When I got up there, it didn’t take long at all. I like being able to get the license right there and walk out the door.”

“Length of time is my most important thing. I want to get in and out. Last time I was there, it took about 20 minutes. That’s good. I got it done and won’t have to do it for another year.”

“When you walk in, you feel intimidated, like you’re guilty of something... I went three times in 2000. The shortest I ever got out was one hour. First of all, there’s a lot of Mexicans in there; they take a lot of time. When you do get to the people who work there, they’re usually friendly.”

“A well-manned help desk would be really nice. Two or three people behind the desk ready to help you out. That would take a lot of stress out of the people at the counters.”

“When you go in, it does take you a little time to figure out where to go, what to pick up. It would be nice if it was kind of intuitive, obvious, easier to figure out here’s where you go if you’re renewing your license.”

“It’s been two years. I went in to renew my license... I had some time so I just stopped by [before I left on a trip]. I waited in line for 25 minutes, did my eye exam and everything. Came time to pay, and I realized I was out of checks. I didn’t have enough cash, and they wouldn’t take a credit card. Maybe they do now, but they didn’t then. I had to come back another day... When I came back [after my trip], I had to start all over. Plus, by the time I got back from my trip, it was past the deadline, and I had to pay a late fee.”

“A child-friendly environment. [The play area] kept my kids busy while I was taking care of what I had to do.”

“[I’d like] not to have to go there and just do everything on the Internet. They keep your photo on a computer file anyway; it seems it would be pretty simple.”

“More work-friendly hours. I don’t think they have any nights of the week that they’re open late.”

“When I moved into state and had to register the car and change the title, they came out and looked at the car and checked the [VIN] under the hood and under the car to be sure it matched, as if I was bringing in a car that had been [assembled from stolen parts], like I was a criminal... They wouldn’t let me register, because it was in my husband’s name, so I had to drag him in. Unnecessary harassment... They’re too tightly wound.”

“I’d like more locations.”

The moderator asked the participants to rank the importance of the six elements they had identified as part of a good DMV office experience. Length of time and customer service were most important to a clear majority of the group. Better hours/locations was ranked near the middle by most everyone. Payment options, child friendly, and less intimidating were ranked low by nearly everyone. Even though there were several participants who had children at home, only one put child friendly in the top half of the list. She said earlier she takes them everywhere, while others may have had more options to leave their children elsewhere for such errands.

One participant complained, “The cost to register a vehicle has steadily gone up over the last ten years. It was \$25 for a heck of a long time, and the last one was \$50 or \$48.” The moderator asked others how they felt about DMV fees. A woman had come from Kansas where car registration was \$400. A man explained that Wisconsin fees are lower because they are subsidized by sales tax. He said Minnesota’s fees are also high, but that state does not have sales tax on consumer goods, which makes car registration more bearable. He was concerned that Wisconsin fees had doubled in only a few years, and suspected the sales tax was no longer being applied. A third participant asked if the increased fees were going to result in better service, such as the longer hours and other improvements the group had just identified. The second replied, “Does a 37-cent stamp get you faster mail delivery?” and the rest of the group laughed. Many were skeptical that cost increases would result in better service, “If the registration fee goes from \$48 to \$75, the workers will still get the same wage.” They felt there had been some improvement in service since the fee doubled, but not enough to justify it, especially because some locations were closed to save money.

A female participant brought up a new suggestion for the DMV:

“I don’t think they’ve kept up with technology. I think there are a lot of things they could do to make the process a lot quicker. The length of time it took to do the picture. I took my sister to register for college. They took her picture and gave her her photo ID in maybe ten seconds. At the DMV, you had to wait for maybe two minutes and wait for the picture to print out... It’s not one-stop shopping; you have to go to one desk and another desk and another.”

“As far as the amount of time it takes to actually make your ID, it’s a coded card, and it’s got your information.”

“It’s got all your information in the bar code in the back, but I don’t think they ever use it for anything. If the cops pull you over, I don’t think they scan it.”

### **State Patrol**

About half the group had had contact with the State Patrol in the last two years, two of them in the last six months.

“My little brother is in the State Patrol.”

“I was speeding [eight months ago], and I got pulled over. I was sick, which is why I was hurrying home, and the officer was very nice and followed me home to make sure I got home okay... He was very pleasant. I knew I was speeding, and I told him why: I was trying to get home before I threw up. I threw up there, and then he followed me home. He didn’t ticket me.”

“I was hit by a semi-truck [a year and a half ago]. My daughters were in the back, and all of us came out okay. The officers were very nice; they showed concern. They were not just there for the information; they were checking on people.”

“I was in a car accident about two years ago, and State Patrol was one of the first on the scene. My experience with them was very pleasant. I called later for a copy of the police report, and the person was very helpful... [The accident] was with another vehicle at an intersection. I ended up being the one responsible, because I didn’t see the other car coming. They were very courteous. I talked to one [trooper] very briefly before I went in the ambulance, and then later, for my own information, I called to get the police report... They mailed the ticket to me later. They didn’t really say anything to me at the time about being ticketed, so I guess it was kind of a surprise to see what they had ticketed me for – a failure to yield right of way.”

“A few months ago, I had a blown tire, and I pulled over to the side of the highway. He pulled over to make sure I was okay. I told him I had already called it in and had a truck coming. He stayed to talk and said he’d check back in a half hour, which I appreciated. I was gone by that time, but he probably did it.”

“I got pulled over for speeding. Compared to the county cops, he was a very cool guy. His attitude was very professional.” *(Another participant interjected, “He made you want to say thank you when he gave you the ticket?” Everyone laughed.)* “Yeah, he did.”

The moderator asked the participants how they would describe the Wisconsin State Patrol to a newcomer. They said professional, most of the time friendly, interested in our safety, and trustworthy. The moderator probed for the elements of a traffic stop with a trooper that made it satisfactory.

An older man didn't like it when an officer, who pulled him over for speeding, told him to stay in his car and then approached his car "like I was a criminal" with one hand on his gun. He remembered this happening twice with a county police officer. Another man said an officer had approached his car with the gun drawn.

One participant said that during a traffic stop, "Everybody's thinking about one thing: give me a warning instead of a ticket. So, [one thing that would make it a good experience would be] being fair... Giving a few people a break."

A woman said it was important that the officer "treat you with respect," and a few other women nodded. The first woman elaborated on how to be respectful, "When they come up, [they should] be courteous and polite, not say something slanderous or 'do you know you were speeding' kind of thing. To be polite and say 'how's it going, what's going on,' not come at you with..." Another woman finished her sentence, "...an attitude." The man who complained about the drawn gun repeated his earlier description, "like you were a criminal." The first woman continued to describe the attitude she didn't like, which was, "I'm better than you, I'm in control, I'm in power." A man sympathized with officers' need to protect themselves, and others nodded as he said, "Until they make contact with you and look at your license, they don't know *who* you are. And we know that police officers have been shot." The woman who brought up the issue of respect said she thought the officer "ran your license plates" before getting out of the car, and another said that only told them the car, not the driver. She countered, "But if it's a woman with a child, then obviously—" but the men cut her off with, "Don't matter." Another woman said, "I have no problem with them putting their hand on their gun. My father was a police officer." The first woman said, "I drove into a town where the speed limit dropped suddenly, and the police officer was sitting right there... All of a sudden, I noticed I was in a decreased speed zone, and as soon as I noticed, I slowed down, but the cop was right there. I didn't think that was fair." Another man complained that he had been stopped three times by the same state trooper on the same trip. He had been driving 45 hours and was "dog tired." He complained that the officer "wouldn't listen to two words that came out of my mouth."

The moderator asked what was most important: fairness, respect, or attitude. They couldn't distinguish among these enough to prioritize. One said how the interaction went in the first 15 to 30 seconds influenced the whole event.

A woman complained that on some roads, the speed limit is reduced at certain times of year, and frequent drivers may be stopped for speeding although they are driving at a speed that was always acceptable before.

All agreed emphatically that fines should be doubled in construction zones. One who works in road construction said some people think the row of orange barrels is a wall that construction workers can't go past. He said many drivers "fly through" a construction zone. The school crossing guard said the same was true of school zones.

The road construction worker expressed interest in discussing enforcement of weight and safety regulations for semi-trucks and dump trucks.

### Property Affected by Road Construction

Four participants had owned property affected by a DOT construction project. They described their experiences.

“We had ten acres of land and the highway bought—took!—five acres of it. They are putting a superhighway in our backyard (Highway 10 in rural Winchester)... When it had come to terms on selling it, and when they came to deal with us, we asked where the line would be, because the property’s kind of curved... They finally came out and put some wooden slats to mark the line. After all the negotiation, they sent us a letter and said, ‘We’re taking your property, here’s your check.’ We immediately went out and planted trees all along the line, about six feet inside the line. A couple months later they came and put in the metal posts, about halfway through, the line veered inside the line made by the wooden slats, so they took 20 more feet than we thought of our property... They claimed we moved the stakes... Now they claim those trees are theirs... We talked to them and they were like, ‘Too bad.’” (*“Did they give you a fair price?”*) “No, but you don’t have a choice...” (*“Did they split your property into two pieces, or are you all on one side of the road?”*) “We had a 600-foot driveway, and the house is at one side of the property. They took the other side, and right now, they are driving construction equipment back and forth, and our little driveway is all torn up.” (*“How does this experience make you feel?”*) “I’m a little bit belligerent... You can’t do anything about it, so you feel frustrated. They have all the power.”

“I’m going around on the second time with this. Now I’m on Highway 10, but last time I was on Highway 150. I had a house right on 150. Their restoration of how they set my yard up and stuff was just pitiful. They hire contractors to redo your lawn and all this... Not even close [to how it was], down to the type of seed they used. They used crappy weed seed, so you had all kinds of junk growing in your yard...” (*“Were you compensated for any of this?”*) “No, I was on the phone with these guys, and it turned into a nasty argument. They basically just hung up the phone on me... They had weeds around a telephone pole they put in; they said they were going to re-do that and put in a bike trail. They kept leaving it, kept leaving it. Finally, I had stuff that was probably six feet tall in there. I had to spend my time to go clear it out... Now with Highway 10, they came through and CenturyTel ripped my ditch out and left it. Are they going to come back and fix it? I don’t know. They said they would, but when? When the road construction is done? That’s gonna be three years! My ditch is going to be so overgrown—you can’t mow it. If you try, you rip your lawnmower all up. So, it’s costing me money, and my property is looking like crap.”

“My property is affected by Highway 10, too. Actually the ‘End Construction’ sign is on my property. The only effect I’ve had so far is they’ve had to re-route some power lines and things. They drove on my lawn without asking me first, with heavy equipment, kind of tore it up, and I haven’t heard anything about that yet. I’m kind of waiting around to see what they’re going to say. I talked to the construction manager a while back; he came through the neighborhood a year ago to say hi. They said don’t worry about it... They’ve done a great job so far... of keeping the roads clear of dirt and rocks. There’s constantly a sweeper truck going back and forth. [The first speaker said a sweeper goes by her street occasionally, but it’s still not worth her while to wash her car; everything gets so dirty.] They go by morning and evening both. I’m really impressed with that, to tell the truth. I had a brand new pickup truck, and I figured it would be full of rock dents and scratches by the end of the summer, but it’s pretty good.”



“It’s just in the planning stages now. Out where I live, they’re going to put an interchange. They had a meeting about it in April and said it was scheduled for [last month], but we’ve never received any more paperwork on it... The road could go right through where my house is.”

The moderator asked what the DOT could have done to make their experience more positive. Each gave an answer specific to his or her own situation.

“They could either move their stakes back to where the original wooden slats were, or they could take the trees I planted—there are about 50 in the line, and about half of them they say are on their property now—they could move those onto our side of their new line. It was a lot of work, and I don’t want to dig them up and move them. Also, whenever it rains, it floods my whole property, because they’ve changed the grade.”

“Proper restoration and landscaping. The houses that they are coming close to, for the dollars they get in some of these budgets for all this construction, can they do a little tree planting to buffer the noise?”

“Being in the road construction business, I know first hand that the DOT is very unorganized as far as taking complaints from landowners and relaying them to the contractors. I’ve had instances where the landowners come to me and start chewing on me, and I have no clue what they’re talking about.”

“The contractors, if you do get to talk to them, they’re like, ‘Hey, I ain’t got time to fool with you. You’re just one little bitty part of this.’ They just brush you off hard... They don’t have a lot of respect—they’re doing their job. I used to be in railroad construction, and I seen that you have to do your thing. You’re affecting a lot of people along the way, and they don’t care... They gotta get their money, they’re on a time schedule, there’s bonuses to get done early and blah, blah, blah. That’s what they’re concerned with.”

“From the sound of what these people are saying, they [DOT] need a little more understanding of these people that are all of a sudden thrown into a situation that changes their whole life and upheaves them.”

“They need to put out their final plan—I know there’s gotta be some give and take, but I think they should come out with a more finalized plan than they do initially. They come out and one month they show you this map, and the next month they show you another map with the lines drawn a little different, and the next plan is a little more different. There’s people near me that are on the bubble half the time whether they’re going to lose their front yard, or lose their whole house, or lose nothing... They owe it to us to come out with a pretty firm plan before they start just floating ideas in the community to see what’s going to stick.”

“I really hate to see these state highways go through some really nice piece of land. Highway 10’s going right through the marsh. There’s probably no way around it, but I’m a big hunter and fisherman, and there used to be lots of pheasants out there and all kinds of wildlife. To find spots for these roads, they have to take the unpopulated areas, which are the nicest areas. The places that are easiest to spoil are the easiest places to put roads.”

“Being in the business, when we disturb a wetland like that, we’re supposed to make a new one... But you can’t replace something like that. You can’t make something that natural.”

“Fair compensation for the land. I have a friend at work who owns agricultural land... They’re taking 18 acres of her land... She says they aren’t being given what the actual value of the land is at all.”

The moderator categorized the comments into the following items and asked participants to rank them in order of importance:

- Fair compensation of land
- Communication (between resident, contractor, and DOT; also sticking to original agreement and presenting a finalized plan early in the process)
- Respect and understanding for property owners
- Landscaping restoration and noise buffer
- Respect for natural environment

Fair compensation was ranked number one by more participants (six) than any other item, but three others ranked it fairly low. Communication was ranked number one by only three people, but nearly everyone put it near the top of the list. No one put landscaping in the top half of the list.

### **Driving Affected by Road Construction**

All had experienced road construction on roads they drove. The moderator asked what made them mad.

“Traffic. Being in construction, the traffic through my job site. When I’m driving, I don’t really have a problem with it. I’m understanding.”

“It makes me angry. You have to drive 20 miles to get one mile. You could have been somewhere. I know you have to detour when they tear the road up, but they tear the road up for a long time. Sometimes, I go the other way and then I’ve got to go back anyway. I don’t believe the signs.”

“What signs!?”

“Sometimes for a detour, they run you five miles over and five miles back, when there might be a country road one mile away that would be fine for a car to drive... It’s because of the trucks. They could say the trucks have gotta go over here, but you folks in cars can take the country road and save a lot of time. I’d appreciate knowing that.”

“I’d appreciate knowing where I’m going to come out [of a detour].”

“Early enough signage. All of a sudden you come up and see signs maybe ten feet before the cones start. That’s not enough information for a person to [choose to take a different route]. You get idiots that do that [change direction suddenly to avoid construction]... [Recently, as I approached a certain stretch of road] there were signs and people at a little table in the middle of the road doing a survey. You knew what was going on well in advance; you knew you had to slow down. But sometimes, you’re going on a main road, and all of a sudden, there’s cones straight

across the road but no sign saying why these cones are here or what's going on. All of a sudden—oh no!—you have to stop your vehicle and wait for somebody else to go around.”

“I'd like to see less roads. I don't think you need four lanes all the way to Minocqua. It spoils what I live in Wisconsin for... It just makes it easier for more people to drive more vehicles to more resorts and casinos.”

“The roads are generally good in Wisconsin, I think.”

“My husband, being a truck driver, says that Wisconsin roads are about midway between good and bad. He says some roads are just awful compared to what he's driven, and roads in some places like Pennsylvania are a lot worse.”

The moderator asked what criteria should be used to judge the state highways in Wisconsin, taking into account everything from road quality to construction to signage. The most important thing, many agreed, was “getting there safely.” One said that was second to DOT's planning wisely for economical expansion. Another noted that condensing the time frame for construction was appealing but would require working round the clock and higher costs.

#### **Communication with DOT**

The moderator asked how the participants communicate about road information. Only one used the DOT Web site. Most use the Internet for some things but do not visit the DOT site. The one who does, said it is hard to figure out: “Construction information is on a list pages and pages long. It says ‘Highway 10 between this road and that road’—it doesn't have a map, just written descriptions. If there was a map, you could pick an alternate route.” One reads announcements in the newspaper; she doesn't find it very timely, but it gives her basic information at least every weekend. The trucker's wife said her husband's employer gives him “all the information; they tell him what's closed when, how to go instead.” Another likes a certain radio station's traffic reports, which announce, for example, that a certain bridge will be closed on certain dates. One had “a phone number in my Rolodex” that she always calls when planning a long drive—she wasn't sure but thought it was probably a DOT information line.

The moderator asked what would be the best way to interact with DOT. Some strongly preferred in-person interaction for anything financial or involving paperwork, because they felt confident it would get to the right place. Others do handle paperwork by mail, saying the process is slower, less expensive, and less reliable. One said it was reasonable to have a counter fee to encourage people to handle transactions some other way than in person and keep the office “less congested.” Another said calling was frustrating, because “they have a lot of computer systems where you push a button,” and it is hard to get a “real person” on the phone to answer an unusual question.

#### **Advice to DOT**

The moderator asked what advice they'd give the Secretary of Transportation.

“They're kind of cut-off from feedback. Maybe they should answer their phone.”

“When they make a mistake, they should fix it and not charge you again.”

“Make it [counter service] fast.”

“If this were an American business, and we were paying them, we would expect fast, friendly service. But this is the government, so we expect to have to stand in line for long periods of time and not have you talk to us and charge to use the walk-up counter and so many forms you don’t know what to do. Maybe try running a business instead of a government agency.”

The participants agreed that Wisconsin roads were pretty good compared to other states, and Wisconsin’s road construction was comparable to other states with similar weather.

Traffic enforcement was rated higher than other states, which, one grudgingly admitted, was “probably good from a safety standpoint and everything.” Another said, “Wisconsin claims to be tough on drunk drivers, but then you hear about someone who has been pulled over 11 times for DWI. That isn’t very tough.” Others agreed. One who had lived in several states said traffic enforcement was about the same as California, Texas, and North Carolina.

One participant said DOT could gather public input through mail surveys but admitted most people would consider that junk mail. Another said the DMV does ask people to complete a survey in the office, “and I filled it out.” The first agreed it was a good idea, “Even if only 35% fill ’em out, it’s better than none if you don’t have any survey. You gotta try to extract the feedback somehow.” Another said only people with something to say will respond. Another said she believed DMV gets plenty of feedback, “All those irate people in line are telling them, but they’re not doing anything about it.”

The moderator asked whether the participants had a sense of whether DOT spent money wisely on things that mattered to them and where they got their information. One woman said she was closely following improvements to a bridge she often travels. Another said, “When I lived in Idaho, when you paid your motor vehicle registration, they detailed on there what everything was for. A certain amount went to emergency services and so on. That was nice, because you never have time to go look that up.” Others agreed that they didn’t know where DMV or DOT allocated their money. One said it didn’t matter; she had to have a license to drive, and she couldn’t refuse to pay the fee in protest of improper spending. Another replied that people who are concerned about government spending have to take some responsibility to look up the information. Another said, “On gas pumps, they can tell me 7¢ a gallon goes for this, and 12¢ a gallon goes for that. I don’t believe that crap. They can tell me till they’re blue in the face, and I wouldn’t believe them till I looked it up for myself.”

A woman who had lived in other parts of the country and traveled a good deal said:

“In lots of places, I’ve said, ‘They need better roads or more roads or wider roads here,’ or ‘I don’t want to wait in traffic jams,’ or ‘Certain times of day this road just isn’t good enough.’ I don’t really say that around here or in Wisconsin. Maybe it’s just where I live, but here I hear more of, ‘Why are they putting another road through here?’”

## **NOTES FROM ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEW**

### **APPLETON RURAL (GROUP #2)**

One person who was recruited to the focus group arrived too late to participate. The moderator contacted him by telephone and conducted a one-on-one interview following the focus group outline. His comments are summarized here; the report gives more space to him than to any other single respondent because of the nature of the data collection.

Abe is a current farmer (dairy, hay, and corn) who owns property (15 acres) that is being affected by Highway 10. His interaction with DOT has included negotiations since the start of the undertaking and registering his farm vehicles. He mentioned some DOT employees by name as people he has spoken with about the highway project.

He feels the best job the DOT does is at the DMV, where he has had very little interaction. He does nearly everything by mail and says it has worked out well for him. He had very little to say about that process, only that it worked well for him. He said the same about the State Patrol, saying that he felt they did a good job with traffic flow, and he felt that the state patrol dealt with people in a fairer manner than county or city police.

Abe does feel that the DOT needs to upgrade its contact with residents when constructing new roads or additional road improvements. The entire process he has been through has given him very little confidence in the DOT and has been very upsetting to him. The impact of construction on his property was his biggest concern. He was on an 8-member panel selected by the DOT to aid in suggesting where Highway 10 road construction should go. He said the DOT solicited their findings, then went ahead and “did their own thing. They never actually listened to us. They chose the project that cost a million dollars more and was detrimental to many more residents.

Since the DOT finalized where the road was going, he has had “numerous” discussions with them. First on the list was the fact that they deemed his land condemned or “bare land” and gave him an unfair price for the land. Once the DOT started going through his property, he has had a number of issues. They never came to him to discuss what they were and were not going to do to the property, not even when they started the work in that area. Because he has farmland there, he was concerned about drainage and water runoff issues. No one has appeased his concerns in that matter, and they only say that there will be little or no flooding in the area. He doesn’t believe them.

The entire process has made him angry and bitter. “The DOT has their own set of rules,” he says. “As far as I can see, they have no accountability.” He accused them of having a “Hitler mentality.”

As for road construction, the DOT does a very poor job of signage, in his mind. He has had numerous people stop by his property trying to figure out exactly where they are. He also feels that the DOT is headed for disaster, routing large trucks over a 12-ton bridge that he feels will eventually collapse. “I just tell (the truckers) to go over it really fast so that it doesn’t collapse on them.”

In closing, he feels slighted by the entire Highway 10 process, and was glad he could vent about DOT to someone who will “make sure my voice is heard.”

### **DOT FOCUS GROUP #3 DETAILED FINDINGS URBAN (MILWAUKEE)**

#### **Participants**

There were 12 participants, seven men and five women, from in and around Milwaukee. They represented a range of ages, with three who seemed to be under 25 and at least three with grown children. All but one were Caucasian.

Mark, Milwaukee, engineer  
Deena, Greenfield, correction officer  
Carol, West Allis, retired  
Corey, Milwaukee, works at bike parts warehouse  
Claire, Milwaukee, university student  
Marrick, Milwaukee, school bus driver  
Sandra, Milwaukee, school bus driver  
Paul, Milwaukee, retired  
Kara, Wauwatosa, university student  
Lynn, West Allis, retired teachers aide  
Ron, Milwaukee, laborer at airport  
Berry, Milwaukee, single mother

As the participants introduced themselves, they described their most recent interaction with the DOT. Seven mentioned interacting with the DMV for licensing or vehicle registration. Two mentioned construction on state or city roads. Three mentioned interactions with police but not necessarily the State Patrol.

“The construction downtown, where they’re ripping up the freeway. That was very badly planned; I’ve seen several near accidents... The only way to exit is on 6<sup>th</sup> Street, and there’s a very short area to wait to make the turn.”

“About a year ago, I had a parking ticket in Wauwatosa and paid it. I just recently got my renewal notice for my license plates, but I can’t get it straightened out between the DMV and Wauwatosa. I’ve been on the phone for days.”

“I renewed my driver’s license in January, and they gave me one for nine years. I don’t understand that... at my age (66).”

“I got pulled over by the local cops for suspended license, because I didn’t get my emissions. It’s a \$75 ticket, or I can go to court. It’s \$25 to get the emissions and \$25 court fee, so that’s \$50 or pay a \$75 ticket. I don’t understand that.”

“I recently renewed my license. It was an efficient process; I was pretty much in and out. But nine years, I don’t understand that. I’m sure I’m going to change in the next nine years, lookwise at least.”

“I’m a school bus driver. I experience traffic congestion and construction. The most recent was at Howard and Curtis. I think there should be policemen to direct traffic. It would be better and faster.”

“Monday, I was in a very minor car accident. A car cut me off on the expressway. I almost missed him, but I hit him, and the guy drove away. Because I thought he might have gotten my license, I called the sheriff’s office and told them what happened. They gave me a ticket for following too closely.”

“Emissions test and license plate renewal. That was last month. A few months before was driver’s license renewal. My wife also.”

“License plate renewal.”

“Driver’s license renewal.”

“My most recent experience was at the DMV. My 18-year-old son got stopped by the police, because his first name was not spelled out on his driver’s license. They gave him a ticket and ten days to get it corrected. I went to the DMV with him to change it... [She explained that he goes by a different name on his medical records than he is known by in school, and there wasn’t room for the whole hyphenated name on the license.]... When he first got his license two years ago, they told him that would be okay [to use his first initial instead of his name].”

### **Perception of DOT**

The moderator asked what functions come to mind when they think of the Department of Transportation. They listed license plates, checking trucks for weight, patrolling the highways, and “crowds of people when you go to get a license.”

This last comment elicited the following complaint about the DMV from another respondent:

“It’s a disaster; they’ve got the worst system. They could have ten booths there, and there are two people working and 300 people waiting. Take a number. They act like they’re God, and they’re doing you a favor to renew your license or whatever. They’re very rude normally. It’s us that’s giving them the job, but you take a number, and you can wait 45 minutes to an hour.”

A woman countered that she had had “very good luck” at the DMV office: “I have a learning disability, and they actually help me fill out the forms.”

When asked in the context of the DMV, what was the most important job of the DOT, some said it was licensing cars and drivers. One participant had been “hit by a car of a guy whose... license had expired, and he didn’t have insurance.” He and another agreed that it was important for DOT to enforce licensing and insurance regulations. One said, “You hear about people who get in an accident... who had their license revoked four years ago, and they’re still driving... There has to be some way to keep them off the road, even if they have to grab their car or whatever.” Nearly everyone in the group agreed licensing cars and drivers was the most important task of the DOT.

An older woman said State Patrol was the most important function of the DOT. She said:

“I needed assistance. I was driving back from Michigan on New Year’s Eve, and the car kept freezing up, and I pulled over to the side of the road. A state trooper stopped and got the car started. I went a couple miles farther, and it stopped again.

Another state trooper stopped and called a tow truck, and then he drove me home.  
He was going to the office [near my house].”



The moderator asked if anyone else felt state troopers were the most important part of DOT. Another older woman said that was very important but not the most important, and several others nodded in agreement. The moderator asked for other important functions, and no one mentioned anything.

### **Division of Motor Vehicles**

Everyone in the group had been to the DMV office within the last six months. The moderator asked them to describe the experience. One who had earlier complained vigorously about the wait said:

“Well, once I got to the window, it was okay. But it’s a big wait... You take a number, and they go by ABCD section. You could be number 30, but you don’t know if you’re in A section or C section; they don’t tell you. There could be 100 people ahead of you... You could hear them call 27 and think you’ve only got three more to go, but you have to go another 100 people before they get to Section B... When I go up north, I go to the Wisconsin Rapids office, and I’m in and out in five minutes... I can see waiting a half an hour... But if they have available booths there, why do they only have two or three people working? That’s what I don’t understand.”

Others contributed their stories:

“I went for a driver’s license. It was a half-hour wait, but I always take a book... I go to Grange. They have the lights and the numbers, but they have driver’s license, car license, motorcycle license. You just watch where your number is.” (*Moderator: “Is it easy to figure out where to go?”*) “Oh, yes.”

“I went for a license renewal. It was easy. It was maybe 45 minutes to an hour. I went to Grange. My friend and I went together. We got our tickets right away, then we left and came back, and we just waited maybe ten minutes till they called us. We were able to go up together.”

“It was at Grange for a driver’s license. I think they do a good job. If you go in the middle of the day—I never go before or after work—I like to go at 10 or 11 o’clock ’cause there’s only maybe 150 people waiting. [Others laughed at this.] ...when I go, it’s like going to the grocery store; if I’m in a hurry, I’m not gonna go... I usually take 45 minutes... They don’t fool around; they don’t talk... I’ve never had any problem with rudeness.”

“I got my driver’s license because the old one was so faded... I only waited 15 minutes.”

“I got there at noon, and people were coming and coming, and all the windows were open. But within a few minutes, all the people who work there started taking lunch break, and soon, only four windows were open... I waited probably one and a half hours. I didn’t have time to wait... The people are nice, but the system is [bad]. They should take lunch breaks before or after the busy time.”

“I got my license renewed a couple months ago. I thought it was pretty organized. To get your ticket, you press different buttons depending what you are there for. I waited 20 minutes to a half hour; it wasn’t bad at all. I think most of the booths were open.”

“I was registering a car I’d bought. I planned it out. I always go with a friend. The first thing you do is take a number and wait in line for information. Then you leave and hope we made it back in time for our number. But that was before I had my job. I work a lot now, from 7:00 to 7:00 and Saturdays too. I don’t know when I’d have time because DMV is open like 9:00 to 5:00.”

This was the participant who had earlier said he’d been pulled over for a suspended license (or probably an expired registration), because he had not gotten his emission test. The moderator asked whether he had received a notice, and he said he probably got one but missed seeing it. The moderator probed for why he had not gotten the test once he realized it was expired. He said it was inconvenient to get the test because of his work hours, and it had lingered at the back of his mind, so he hadn’t taken the effort to plan a way to get it done, like asking his brother to take the car for the test.

Others echoed similar sentiments about driver’s licensing:

“I go to Waukesha; there’s no numbers. You wait in line for either car registration or driver’s license. For driver’s license, there’s maybe four or five people in front of you at the most. There’s two women that work the windows, and they’re very efficient. You’re in and out of there in no time.”

“I went to Grange for driver’s licensing. The ticket thing works, but like [another participant] said, you get a number, say 34, you look up there, and it’s on 30, and you think it’s only four more people. But they’re going all the way down the row, and there’s all the different topics. With my four-year-old daughter, it’s [inconvenient]; she starts running around... I work a lot of forced overtime, so I’m not able to get there.”

“For driver’s licensing, I went to College. I went at 10:00, just after the early morning rush. I got through in about 20 minutes. That’s really good. I’ve spent over an hour other times. I was surprised it was only 20 minutes.”

This participant said he felt the delays were caused when clerks take their lunch break when the office is crowded, and then the backup lasts the rest of the day. Many other participants agreed. One said there wasn’t much that could be done, other than staggering clerks’ lunch hours. He said the DOT tries to discourage people from going into the DMV office at all by adding a \$2 counter charge. He felt that was a good idea, and people should not go to the office unless they had to.

“Sometimes, someone who comes in after me gets served before me... They pick a ticket up off the floor from someone who gave up and left. People are constantly trading up. My son and I sat down, and someone who came in six after us, someone told her, you can have my number; I found this one. That put her way ahead of us. It made me mad.”

“At the first counter, you ask for the form that you need for a name change. I had to explain—my son started to explain, but he couldn’t quite get it in—so I had to interject. She said, ‘Well, I can tell you, if they said the name has to be as it is on the birth certificate, then you’re going to have to have the birth certificate with you. I hate for you to sit, and wait, and get to the counter, and have them tell you, you have to go get the birth certificate.’ I didn’t buy that; I said, ‘I’ll take my chances. I’ll fill out the form.’ ...when I got to the counter, I explained everything. The lady [shook

her head] and said, 'I don't know why they put you through this.' She put everything the way it was supposed to be. We paid \$4, and we didn't need the birth certificate. [I'm glad we didn't] go back to get a birth certificate that we didn't need... It seemed like she [the first woman] was trying to help, but she didn't really know the rules and regulations."

The moderator asked the group to list the factors that would make them walk out of the DMV office feeling the experience had been very satisfactory. One said "courtesy", and others expanded on exactly what that meant. They said they'd perceive courtesy if the staff seemed to want to be helpful, "not seem like you're bothering them," if they are "not short with you," if they smile, and if they "listen to what you say and try to understand." Other satisfiers included:

"Short lines."

"Provide estimated wait time [some offices have inaccurate estimates that need to be accurate]."

"A lot of clerks."

"Help people with special needs, fill in forms for you."

"Greeter or information desk at the door (like the one in Waukesha)."

"More locations, spread out the crowd."

"Extended hours."

"Educate the public—lots of people could do their business by mail."

"Better renewal notices and forms—put the expiration date in bolder letters, so you don't miss it."

When one participant brought up alternatives to visiting the office, several said they had done some tasks, such as renewing license plates, by mail, and the process had gone smoothly.

The moderator asked the group how frequently they felt licenses should be renewed. The 66-year-old woman, who brought up this subject at the beginning of the session said, "You should get a renewal every two years. When my father was alive, he was 75, and he had a valid license in his wallet, but he hadn't driven a car in 25 years... They just mailed the renewal to my father." Others suggested four or five years. A 66-year-old man said, "When my license expires, I'll be 74. I think once you get to, say 60, you should get a driving test every couple years." Many participants nodded and spoke up in agreement. One of the youngest participants said that at a certain age, eye tests should also be given.

Later, in a discussion of courtesy, an older woman in the group said her grandchildren and their friends didn't want to go to Grange for their driving tests, because "the fellas that give the tests" are too tough and refuse to pass new drivers for minor errors. They are also rude, she said. Another participant said she had gone to the South Milwaukee office, because "they are easier, more relaxed down there."

The moderator combined some of the factors they had listed and asked the group to rank the following:

- Short lines (includes accurate estimates)
- Hours
- Locations
- Number of tellers
- Assistance (includes better forms, info desk, greeter, educate public on alternatives)
- Courtesy

Short lines were the most important for four people. Courtesy was the most important for three, and these three also ranked short lines second. However, for a different three, courtesy was the least important; these three placed short lines or extended hours at the top of the list.

The moderator also asked the participants to rate how satisfied they were with their most recent experience in the DMV office. They used a 10-point scale, with 10 being best. Four gave 10s, and all but three gave a 6 or higher. The mean rating was 7.4.

The moderator brought up the subject of fees at the DMV. Only one had tried using the DOT Web site to look up vehicle registration but stopped when he saw there was a fee to use it. "It should be totally automated if it's on-line; it should cost the DMV less, so why does it cost me more?" He mailed his paperwork in instead. No others had visited the site and most seemed hesitant to voice an opinion on this. However, they tentatively agreed that there should not be an extra fee, and one older woman said, "The government [IRS] doesn't charge you extra to do your taxes on-line."

Another protested the counter fee at the DMV office: "When you go have the emission test, you can go in the office and get your tags, but it's going to cost you a fee. But, there's nobody there! Why should it cost extra? If you're going for emission, it should be the same as if you send it in, and it would just be that quick." Most agreed that there was a \$2 window fee, but one said there was no fee for renewing a driver's license, only for renewing plates. He added, "I don't know why anyone would go in for plates, when you can just mail the money in."

The moderator tested the idea of adding \$5 and \$10 window fees, with higher fees obtaining faster service. Most would go to the cheapest \$2 window, but one would pay \$10, and two would pay \$5 to get faster service.

Most said they renew their license plates by mail. They said there was no disadvantage to waiting until the last minute: "As soon as you put it in the mail, you can drive the car." Some said the only way to prove you had mailed it, if stopped by the police, would be to show a money-order receipt. An older woman had been stopped and showed the officer her checkbook register, which was proof enough for him.

### **State Patrol**

Two said they had dealt with the State Patrol within the last six months. One was the woman who had called to report hitting another car on the freeway. When she first told the story, she said she had called the sheriff's office, but now she said it had been the State Patrol.

“The guy was playing that he was Mr. Toughie, wouldn’t crack a smile. He goes, ‘Why did you leave the scene?’ I was actually in a dangerous situation where I could have been hit too. I went back to the scene, only on the entrance ramp... [I called in and the trooper met me there]... There were no witnesses to tell my side of the story. I was issued a ticket of \$153. I was very upset, because I thought I was doing the right thing. If the other driver had called in, then I should get a ticket, but he hadn’t called in, so I should be let go... And it took him about 20 minutes for him to write that ticket.”

“We had lost a load on the highway off of the trailer. Naturally, everybody was calling 911. Two or three state troopers showed up, and it cost me \$151 for an insecure load... It was all over the place—16 foot beams—we were lucky nobody hit nothin’... The guy was real good, he really was. He said he’d get somebody in here [to clear it up]. We said no, we’d load it up and take it away... He was courteous... He let us load it ourselves... I drove a semi for 25 years, so I’ve dealt with state troopers all over the country. When I was a 21-year-old, I could accept this guy walking up, Wyatt Earp... But as you get a little older, and you’ve backed up more than they’ve gone forward; you get a little bit tired of these guys trying to educate you how to drive, when in reality, they’re still not wet behind the ears yet.”

The moderator asked them to describe the State Patrol.

“Stern, not like a jerk. They don’t have any emotions. They walk up and tell you what you did and give you your ticket.”

“Helpful. This is going back some time... My daughter... lost the transmission on the freeway... It was 2:00 in the morning. He didn’t have to, but [the trooper] brought her home. I was thankful—you can’t leave a 17-year-old stranded... [On another occasion] we sat on the side of the road... for two hours until we flagged a fellow down... He was a police officer from some small burg... In two hours, no State Patrol went by.”

This woman and another who had spoken earlier about being driven home were both very grateful for the help and concern showed by the officer. The mother of the 17-year-old offered to write a letter of thanks, and the trooper said, “We’re not supposed to do this—please don’t!”

An older man said he thought “the state cops are better than the city cops... The city cops, people think they have quotas at the end of the month. They are kind of happy to give you a ticket. The state cops will sit on a hill where you can see them five miles away. All they want you to do is slow down. It’s more prevention.” Another man disagreed, “They’ve got an awful lot of plain cars out there. They’re not waving at you; they’re stopping you.”

The moderator asked the participants to list the attributes of an interaction that make them satisfied with a traffic stop.

“An explanation.”

“Their attitude right off the bat, if they’re [Wyatt Earp] or just another person.”

“We all know times have changed, and they have to be cautious, but they don’t have to treat you like a criminal before they even know what’s going on.”

“[Yes, for example,] they stopped my brother and made him keep his hands on the steering wheel the whole time.”

“Telling you what they want you to do. Some cops want you to stay in the car, others want you to get out.”

“Two years ago, I got a speeding ticket. The cop was really cocky. He made me get out of the car and look at his gun. [Several gasped in horror, but calmed down and laughed when she continued] ...his radar gun, to see how fast I was going... I had a broken arm at the time and he made me use a finger on that arm instead of my other hand for the fingerprint.”

A young man in the group told a story that happened to his friend. A “Camaro cop” with tinted windows came up next to the driver on the road, but the driver had thought it was a driver egging him on to go faster. “Then he turned on his lights. I don’t really see how like going undercover to like pull over like speeders is like necessary.” He said he’d identify state patrol cars by reflectors on the sides. Others agreed there are a lot of “plain” cars, “Mustangs and Camaros,” said one, and an older woman said they use “cars from drug dealers who are arrested.”

The moderator asked them to rank the importance of an explanation, a decent attitude (not making you feel like a criminal, showing respect), and direction/communication. Attitude ranked most important with half the participants. An explanation of their violation was most important for almost all the rest.

### **Property Affected by Construction**

None of the participants had themselves owned property that was affected by state highway construction. One said his sister-in-law had; she lives in Oconomowoc, and the highway was planned to be moved right where her house is. The DOT warned her five years ago and was supposed to give her a definite answer two years ago, but she still doesn’t know for sure. He assumed she was getting her information “straight from the highway department... they call her on the phone.”

### **Driving Affected by Construction**

Everyone in the group had encountered state road construction in the past year. One said construction on Highway 45 northbound has affected her route to school. A school bus driver said people count on her to be on time, and she has to get an early start and drive a lot of back roads because of I-94 construction. The moderator asked what made them mad.

An older woman said, “People go in the [closed] lane and try to get ahead. Someone should stop them and make them wait for 100 cars!” Others laughed and nodded in agreement. She gave an example of construction near the zoo and said the sign indicates the lane is closed long before it is, which gives some drivers the chance to rush far ahead.

Poor road conditions made a young woman mad: “I drive back and forth between Milwaukee and Madison a lot, and Jefferson County is so bad. There’s pot holes in the road, and there are no signs, and my car is taking quite a beating. They should have signs saying Holes or Bump, to warn you.” An older man commented, “Nobody likes

construction, but everybody complains about the roads. It's a bad situation because you can't build all year round here. You've got to learn to accept it."

A woman said, "I think they did a pretty good job with I-94 to Madison. It didn't take them all that long, and they did a lot of it at night. They tried to keep as many lanes open as possible... If you pay attention and go at a steady pace, you get through it." Another man agreed with her that it was "a good project," and a few others nodded. One said recent projects had taken less time than in years past.

"I-94 about five or six years ago was poorly managed, but when they got farther north, they got their management skills down better. They sequenced it better. We've had times in the past when we'd have large sections with no activity. It's almost criminal because of the... number of people who rely on that road. To have that resource so badly impaired... Project management, I can't emphasize that enough. Keep contractors coming, and when a section is done, then open that section up."

"In Chicago, they work 24 hours a day, seven days a week through the summer. They don't work like they do here."

"I used to drive to Germantown every day on 95. They started tearing it up in April and then finished it at almost Christmas. Cars would go in the ditch to go around my bus. In construction, I'm nervous about the other drivers. They drive like maniacs and they don't know it takes a lot longer for a 62-passenger bus to stop... They did a good job. There's less bumps."

"Working at night more than they did years ago, that helps a lot. They close off two lanes at night and have one open, but in the day they have at least two open." (*All agreed.*)

"One area they're really lagging on is around Madison, 90-94, it seems they've been building that forever. Put in an extra lane. Twice, they've made that swing to Milwaukee on that bridge there, a couple times over in the last five years. I've seen it down to one lane during the day where they had one-hour waits. We stood in line; we didn't move."

The moderator asked the participants how they felt about the construction signage.

"They're helpful."

"If you know the time limit, people just get off."

"The signs are good, but drivers don't pay attention to them. They want to get to the front regardless."

"Sometimes, they give you too much notice. They say, Road Construction 5 miles, 2 miles, 1500 feet. And somebody driving thinks, 'Oh, I can go 1500 feet before it closes off.' If the sign said, Lane closed 500 feet ahead, maybe they'd start moving over."

The moderator asked them what factors contributed to their satisfaction with road construction. One said, "How long it takes to complete it." Another countered,

“Increase in travel time... for the average driver... If you can manage your construction project so it takes six years, but it has minimal impact on traffic flow, that’s a better fit.”

The participants accepted that some big projects take several years. One said he was encouraged “when I see something’s changing every day. Sometimes you drive by, and you see no change.” Others agreed, they like to see progress.

When the project is done, the most important thing is smoother roads and decreased travel time. The moderator asked how slow a road has to be before adding a lane is warranted. An older woman replied, “That’s not always the answer. You just get more congestion.” A man countered, “You try to drive on the roads we’ve got now 25 years from now, and it will be bumper to bumper from the time you hit the county line... They can put in some kind of mass transit I guess, but if you look at people going to work in the morning, 90% of the cars has got one person in it.” He was discouraged about the prospects of changing people’s habits.

The moderator asked if fines should be doubled in work zones, and several people said “Yes” loudly and firmly. One added, “When they’re working.” He said doubling should not apply if no one is working, and the rest agreed with murmuring and nodding. Another man said, “You can feel that you’ve got someone’s life on the line.”

### **Communication with DOT**

A university student had used the Milwaukee mass transit Web site for bus schedules. “It’s very helpful. You pick which route you want; it’s pretty organized.” Another university student tried to look up the Badger Bus schedule, but the site was very out of date. Only one participant had ever visited the DOT Web site. He used the traffic count for the highway on ramp near his house, so he’d know what to expect. He’d leave earlier if traffic was heavy. He found it was easier to use the Web site than to catch the traffic report on a news broadcast. The three Internet users agreed that they’d like as much DOT business and information as possible to be handled on-line because it was more convenient than in person, by mail, or by phone.

Only one had used the DOT 800 number. She had called trying to get a ticket cleared up. (She had paid a city parking ticket, but it was still on file as unpaid, and her plates had been suspended.) It was an automated system that required pressing a lot of buttons. It made her feel lost because there wasn’t a choice for what she needed, and she didn’t know how to get to a person. She and others said that sometimes in such systems, you can get an operator by not pressing anything.

A man also had experienced problems with undeserved tickets on his record. He sold a truck, and the new owner didn’t transfer the plates. A woman told of a friend who had a similar problem when she sold a car; it took five years to straighten it out. Another said she had heard a news item about sellers being responsible for making buyers get new registration; she couldn’t understand why there wouldn’t be a simple mail-in form to unregister a sold car. Someone else said that you could fill out such a form at the DMV.

Several didn’t like the automated call handling. They said it was too automated and takes forever. One said she had once stayed on hold for three hours. Another said, “More often than not, it’s not even an 800 number, it’s 608.” A few others groaned in agreement and discontent.



**Advice for DOT**

At the end of the discussion, the moderator asked them to restate their opinions of DOT. Several said the discussion had not affected their perception or priorities. Most comments had to do with DMV transactions.

“Faster process... They put a scanner [magnetic strip] on your license to make it faster, but it still takes the same amount of time.”

“[My top priority is] still licensing.”

“Better control [over information at DMV].”

“Get some different lines. Somebody’s getting a driver’s license; somebody’s getting a plate. They should identify it more when you go into these places. You’d have less waiting.”

“There should be two or three windows for driver’s licenses. If they’re not busy, they could take the overflow from other windows, but their priority should be licenses.”

Five said the DMV has gotten better in the last eight years, two said it had gotten worse and two said it was about the same. The younger participants were not able to make a comparison.

The moderator asked what DOT did well. Their comments still stayed on the topic of the DMV.

“You used to have to stand in line; now they have seats.”

“As a dealer, we used to have a line where you could go in and do half a dozen cars at one time. Now, you stand in line like anybody else. I know some dealers who [jump in line] and go ahead of about 50 people. I see that all the time in South Milwaukee.”

“One improvement—you used to have to go to 6<sup>th</sup> and State; that was the only office in Milwaukee. They didn’t have all these other offices around town.”

“One thing that’s good, if someone comes in to get a license, and they don’t have the proper identification, things aren’t matching up, and they’re trying to get a license in someone else’s name, there’s a security guard right there to take them to jail. I’ve seen that happen.” (*No one else had seen this happen.*)

The moderator asked how WisDOT compares to other states.

“Good road conditions.”

“They’re good at replacing bridges.”

“Oh, I saw a report that there are some of the worst bridges in the country.”

“The farther south you go, the better the roads get, but of course they don’t have the weather we do.”

The participants rated Wisconsin's roads a little better than average nationwide. On a 10-point scale (10 being best in the country), everyone gave a 5, 6, or 7, with a mean rating of 6.2.

In terms of signage and safety, most felt Wisconsin was pretty good, both in general and for road construction. All nodded that they were content with detour signage.

The moderator asked how much over the speed limit a driver can go without getting a speeding ticket. One man said, "They'll give you about 8 [mph]. They're pretty lenient." Another man, wobbling his hand to indicate ambivalence or estimation, said, "72, 73 they'll usually let you slide." An older woman said, "Traffic conditions and everything, they take that into consideration." An older man said State Patrol was a little strict compared to other states. When asked if that was good or bad, he sounded ambivalent: "Probably good, but every year we go to Sarasota and back... We stay at 85 [from Florida] till we get to Milwaukee County, and then we put it down to 60."

The moderator asked for their suggestions to DOT of ways to keep people satisfied. Their answers all had to do with traffic flow. One man said, "Re-enforce that law they used to have: Pass left, keep right. That's the biggest pet peeve with me... People stay in the left lane for a hundred miles." A woman nodded emphatically as he spoke and then agreed with him, "They think as long as they're going the speed limit, they can stay there." A young participant said the highway interchanges near Marquette have single lanes and are inadequate for traffic flow. Another participant complained that there is not enough time to get into the exit lane for a certain interchange she travels. A third said on-ramps are also too short for drivers to get up to merging speed.

The moderator asked how they'd know if DOT was spending its money on things that matter to them. There was a short silence, and a man protested, "They do so many things. Everything from enforcement to construction to licensing. It's difficult to say. To give a grade, you'd have to grade each area separately." Another man complained, "They give a big sales tax or gas tax for the guy who never bought a car in his life, so he can ride the bus cheaper. I don't like that." He said Wisconsin was the second-highest state in the country for gas tax and added, "I don't feel we're getting enough for our dollar, when you think that our roads are not as good as states where gas is 25¢ a gallon cheaper because they've got a lower tax on it... I think some of it is being used on something other than the roads." He also complained that road markings are not clear, specifically on the Marquette interchange. He liked reflectors in the markings.

A woman suggested that DMV should offer "a drive-through window for express services" like filing certain forms and simple renewals.

## **DOT FOCUS GROUP #4 DETAILED FINDINGS URBAN (APPLETON)**

### **Participants**

There were 12 participants in this group, seven men and five women, recruited from urban and suburban areas in the Fox Valley. They represented a range of ages, with three retired and about half with children at home.

Brian, Appleton, manufacturing supervisor  
Bill, patent attorney  
Henry, retired, divorced  
Randy, Appleton, working  
Sharon, Kimberly, loan officer  
Lois, Neenah, retired farmer  
Tina, Menasha, unemployed graphic artist  
Billie, Neenah, retired  
Vern, Neenah, owns a liquidator business  
Joanne, Neenah, member service supervisor at credit union  
Greg, Kimberly, ex-truck driver trainer, now manages convenience store  
Dale, Appleton, works at university

### **Perception of DOT**

The moderator asked what kinds of things the Department of Transportation does. The first few things called out were road construction, traffic control, bus service, licenses for drivers and cars. A former trucker then listed several things DOT oversees for the trucking industry: transportation safety, rules of the road, service hours for truckers, and in some other states, cargo checks at state borders.

The moderator asked what they felt was DOT's most important function. Two spoke up.

"Traffic control, so we're safe on the roads."

"Responding to emergencies, like accidents. They need to be better trained in life support. I've seen troopers just standing around at an accident scene."

In response to the second comment, an older man asked, "Are the troopers part of Transportation?" A few others murmured that they didn't think so. No one spoke up to insist they were.

The moderator asked the participants what their last encounter with DOT was. Each comment is described in the appropriate section below. Several described visits to the DMV office, and three owned property affected by highway expansion.

After hearing these stories, the moderator asked again what they felt should be the DOT's top priority. A man who was unhappy with DOT's responsiveness regarding highway expansion plans said, "Being more responsive to the people... This is supposed to be a government of the people, by the people, for the people. They're a government all by themselves; they don't have to answer to anybody." Another participant went on, "My experience with that is that they listen to you, then they go their own way. They

make up their mind before they have the meeting.” The first agreed, and another chimed in, “If they want to take your property, there’s no such thing as you saying, ‘I want so much for my property...’ They say, ‘You’ll take what we give you.’ If you don’t, they can condemn your property and take it for their own price.” All these speakers were men.

A woman changed the topic to road safety. “I like how they changed the laws for teenagers, where they can only have one other person in the car [for a transitional period]. And I like that, if you have trouble reading, you can still have your driver’s license because it gives you a test right on the screen by computer and helps you read the questions if you have trouble.”

Another respondent reacted to the comment about teenage drivers.

“I’ve got both sides of her comment. I’ve got a 19-year-old and a 16-year-old [on a probationary license]. I like the hours limits, and I almost kind of wish those were more expanded upon. But, I think the [limit on] number of people in the car is fighting itself. Having only two people in the car is nice, because it limits the [distraction] for the driver. But when there’s a school dance, it means there are two or three times as many cars on the road... When my daughter and two of her friends want to go shopping, they have to take two cars... It’s putting more teenagers on the road at the same time.”

An older man replied that the safety measure of avoiding a car full of crazy kids was more important than the increased car use. Another mother agreed with the speaker, referring to her example of 300 cars at the high school dance: “They can’t even pull out of a parking lot in light traffic in the daytime.”

The moderator asked for examples of what DOT does right. A convenience store manager said,

“From a retailer standpoint, they’ve advanced the program with driver’s licenses, as far as the information being kept in a bar code on the back of the license. Now all the licenses have actual dates above the picture: ‘Not 21 until this date.’ When kids come in looking for beer, it’s easy enough to spot. If it’s red, it’s no good; if it’s green, they’re old enough. And for cigarettes, they’ve gone a step further and have another line below the picture: ‘Not 18 until.’ That helps to eliminate the tobacco problem. It’s a lot harder to make a fake ID now with these new plastic cards with the imprint of the state. In the old days, they’d peel the plastic off, change the picture, laminate over it.”

Another participant said, “The renewal period is eight years. You only have to go in every eight years.” The store manager said, “The problem with that is some of these kids change so much in eight years, you don’t recognize them!” He said the first license is a five-year license, so a 16-year-old gets one that expires when s/he’s 21, and the new card shows her/him to be of legal age.

The moderator asked what the DOT should improve, but respondents kept giving examples of good work regarding licensing and registration. A man complimented the streamlined process at the DMV office for license renewals. He said, “I can remember going and standing in lines. The other line was always moving faster.” Another man said he liked doing plate renewal by mail but didn’t know if that was new or something that had always been done. He felt that had contributed to shorter lines at the DMV office.

Others also seemed unsure about how long it had been done, but some seemed to agree that they liked renewing by mail. One objected to the extra fee for mail renewal.

A woman spoke of quick response to debris on the road, “Since I got my cell phone, they tell you you’re responsible to report debris on the road... The next time I passed by—it’s a route I travel often—it was gone. I was very pleased.” The moderator asked how she knew what number to dial, and she said she always called 911. She laughed, perhaps with embarrassment, and described what she said, to show she knew it wasn’t a real 911 emergency. She told of running over a piece of metal that flipped up and hit her car. When she called, the 911 dispatcher transferred her to DOT, and that operator told her to check her car when she got home and call DOT if there was any damage. She was surprised and pleased by that, and others in the group shared her feelings.

### **Division of Motor Vehicles**

When asked at the beginning of the discussion what their most recent experience with the DOT was, one woman said she had visited the DMV office.

“It was very pleasant; I was very surprised. I had lost my license in Chicago in the airport... I took off work early to go to the DMV, and I got there about 4:30. I took a book, because I thought it would take a long time. I was in and out of there in less than 15 minutes with a new license in my hand. It was amazing. I did not crack my book. I was moving right along. In my past experiences, people haven’t been that pleasant there, so I thought, ‘Wow, they have really improved.’”

“I had to renew a license. Everything went, it seems, overly good. You take a number, they have it up on a screen, you sit down, they call you, you go up. The only thing was, the last time I was there, there was someone sitting at the desk, and this time there wasn’t anybody. It said take a number, and they had the machine there, but they didn’t really point you to the machine. I stood there looking for the little red thing like you pull in the bakery.” [Moderator: “*What desk?*”] “There’s a desk where you come in. Sometimes, there’s a person there and sometimes there’s not. There’s a box where you press what service you want, and then your number comes out. They have a huge sign there that says, ‘Take a number,’ but it doesn’t say [*she points*], ‘...from this box!’”

“That was my experience too; it was very confusing.”

“There’s never been anyone at the desk when I went.”

“There was when I went... [The person was] very helpful.”

“There was someone at the desk, and someone [who came in] was confused. She pointed to how to take a number and then all the other people standing around immediately knew how to do it, so we all went up and did it. It’s not hard. It’s very simple, it just doesn’t have any directions.”

“My wife and I hadn’t been in there since they changed the system. We had the exact same problem with the numbers. You’re overwhelmed when you first walk in—there’s so much to read, so many instructions. There’s signs, get this here, get this here. You have to stand there and look around for a few minutes to figure it out. But then, it was incredibly easy.”

“The person [at the desk] right away helped me, so I didn’t have to figure it out.”

Later in the session, the discussion returned to DMV office visits, and others told their stories. One person had accompanied her daughter when she went to get her first license.

“It was the first snow of the year, so we had to go practice driving in snow before her appointment... The examiner was very nice and understanding about the weather... [She felt] he still gave her a reasonable test... When she came back in, he was very nice about explaining about the couple of things she did wrong. She did pass... He directed her to the right button to push on the machine to get into the right sequence of numbers to get in the right line to finish the process. That did go kind of slow for 9:00 in the morning.”

“I went four months ago to get a disability sticker... They gave me a six-month sticker. I had to pay \$9 for it. They were very nice about everything.”

“I’ve been there six times in the past year.” (*Others laughed.*) “It was kind of confusing [to know where to go]. I had an address change, and I had eye surgery, so I wanted to get the corrective lenses code taken off my license. There’s nothing to direct you for that. I didn’t know what forms to fill out, so I filled out a whole bunch. For an address change, I only had to fill out one, but there was no one to tell me that, so I filled out two or three.”

“I went with my daughter to get her license. The driving instructor could have been more pleasant. They are intimidating. They have a reputation. Even though he passed her, the whole time it seemed like she wasn’t going to pass.”

This woman later referred to one of the examiners as Hitler: “Everybody that knows, that’s the name they give him. He’s very well known for that... He never smiles; he doesn’t talk. He makes everybody nervous.”

The moderator asked them all to rate their most recent experience at the DMV office (only the most recent, whether they hadn’t been there for some time or had been there several times recently). On a 10-point scale, with 10 being the most pleasant, all but one gave a 7 or 8 rating. One said he “wasn’t happy at all” and gave a 3. He later explained that all the clerks seemed to be “having a bad day and taking it out on everybody else.”

The moderator asked the participants to list the factors that made a trip to the DMV office a pleasant experience. A mother of teens brought up the driving examiner nicknamed Hitler, and she and other mothers said the examiners should be pleasant, smile, and make small talk before the teenager gets on the road. There was some disagreement from at least one older man who seemed concerned about accurate testing. All agreed that one factor of a good experience was when the DMV desk clerks and examiners talk nicely to people and try to make it a pleasant experience.

Another factor that would please them was a short wait. They would like to walk in and see short lines and plenty of desk clerks. One said, “Sometimes there’s 14 desks but only five people working, and then two of them decide to go on break at the same time. Then there’s only three, but there’s just as many people waiting.” The rest broke into excited chatter. One commented, “The people at the desk sometimes just wander off.” Another asked, “Have all these people got separate jobs, so they can’t do something else, or are

they trained in all the things?” They felt that cross-training would ensure that staff are assigned where needed, so lines would move as quickly as possible. One man explained that there seemed to be a flexible numbering system, so that no one category gets overloaded; this isn’t fair to people who get passed by later arrivals in another category. He would prefer a “first come, first served” policy.

One participant complained about the pictures taken for driver’s licenses, and others laughed in agreement. His specific complaint was that the photographer directs the light in a way that creates a huge shadow behind his head, which blends with his dark hair and “makes it look like I have an Afro.” Skin tone and reflection on glasses are also affected by bad lighting. They felt better training would improve the photographers’ skills.

A participant who had been to the DMV office a lot because of changes in his trucker’s license said knowing what forms to fill out was always frustrating. He reported seeing people selecting and completing forms, then once they got to the counter, being sent back to find and complete something different. He would like someone always at the information desk near the door to give people the right forms. That would prevent delays for the person with the form and for the people behind him who are delayed when he returns with his correct form. He mentioned that the Madison DMV office always has the information desk staffed, so people can fill out the forms in line knowing they have the right one. Another participant commented that the information helper “pays his own salary” in saved time for the other desk clerks.

The moderator asked them to rank the importance of the following four factors in a DMV office visit:

- Pleasant examiners
- Short lines (enough staff, serve all categories)
- Driver’s license pictures
- Desk clerks (forms, make it easy, not waste time, answer questions, pleasant)

Having short lines was rated most important by seven participants, and three rated efficient clerks most important. Pleasant examiners were on the bottom end of the list for eight participants, and good photos were in the bottom end for everyone.

The moderator asked whether the participants would be willing to pay higher fees to make DMV transactions easier. The group launched into a discussion of the fees charged for different payment methods (\$2.50 for on-line and \$5.00 for in person, no fee for mail renewal). One woman said it was not worth the extra fee to her. A man said it was worth the extra cost for on-line renewal if he had run out of time to renew his registration by mail. A woman said she always pays extra to get her new plate stickers at the DMV office, because she doesn’t trust the mail. One said, “They shouldn’t charge you extra to go in and do it because you’re the one making the extra effort, so why should you pay more on top of that?” Another agreed, “There’s a person in Madison doing the same exact thing [with your mailed-in registration as the desk clerk does], so why are you paying \$5 [when you go in person]?” A few others suggested that the intent was to eliminate the lines by doing as much as possible by mail or on-line. The earlier speaker replied that it wasn’t fair to penalize people trying to register a new car, because they are required to go to the office and don’t have the choice of doing the transaction by mail or on-line. Another said, “I don’t know why you have to pay for every single thing... Don’t taxes pay for anything?” Another said government agencies use fees as a “hidden” way to raise money without raising taxes.

Some maintained that on-line renewal should be free, because it requires less labor for DMV staff; others felt on-line renewal should cost more because a person pays for the convenience of not having to stand in line. One said charging a higher fee for mail than on-line would penalize people who don't have computers. Some felt no transaction should require a transaction fee: "These people are being paid to do the job... We are paying taxes." A university employee was more sympathetic; he said government agencies don't always get the budget they need and charge user fees to supplement their state funding. Some felt the transaction fee should be the same no matter which medium is chosen; others felt there should always be one way that didn't carry a fee. If the same fee was applied to everything, many said, the cost should not be stated separately: "If you say registration is \$22 plus a \$3 fee, people get mad. Just say the fee is \$25." By the end of the discussion, most felt it was best to have one fee for all methods, because it was more fair and would simplify bookkeeping.

A woman who had misplaced her license said she had tried to call the DMV about it, but hadn't been able to talk to a person. Another participant advised her, "You have to pretend you have a rotary phone, and just stay on the line and wait." An older man said cynically, "That's progress."

### **State Patrol**

The moderator asked participants to describe recent encounters with the State Patrol. There was general laughter and a feeling that admitting an encounter was a confession of misbehavior. However, the first person to speak up had received assistance from a trooper (though she repeatedly referred to him as the sheriff).

"My tire blew out on the freeway... I was going 70 mph—sorry!... It was very scary, because my car was very out of balance. It slows you down pretty fast. I got off the freeway. My uncle was killed on the side of the freeway by a drunk driver, so I refused to get out of my car. I was alone; it was dark. Fortunately, I had my cell phone. I dialed 911... I said I would not get out of my car, and she said, 'You're doing the right thing.' When the sheriff came, he was absolutely wonderful."  
(Moderator: "Was it a county sheriff or State Patrol?") "State Patrol... He stayed with me... The sheriff took my owner's manual and figured out where the spare tire was. He got it out for me." (Participant: "Pretty generous for a state worker!") "He asked if I was a member of AAA, and I said yes. He went to his car and called a tow truck. He stayed the entire time."

No one else admitted having contact with State Patrol in the last six months. The moderator asked how they would describe the State Patrol to a newcomer. One participant, a salesman who spends a lot of time on the road, had a lot of criticism. He made the following comments and responses to others' comments.

"There's too many of them. You'll see a person pulled over at the side of the road, and there's two or three State Patrol cars there, two marked and one unmarked. I don't understand why they have to be unmarked." (Another participant: "It's pretty typical they back each other up. If they pull over, another trooper in the area has to drive by, just in case.") "But why do they have to have unmarked cars? It's entrapment. And the Grand Chute police don't have to have backup when they stop someone for speeding..." (Another respondent: "I'm surprised, I never see state troopers.") "I drive about 45,000 miles a year, and I see them a lot.... They should be better trained in emergency [medical] response [to assist people injured in an accident]."



The moderator asked if they trusted the State Patrol. All seemed to take this for granted. A few men grunted, “Yeah” and shrugged. A woman said, “I do because I’ve never had a bad experience. I hope I can trust them.” A man agreed, “Until you’ve had a bad experience, you trust them.”

The moderator asked the woman with the flat tire what factors contributed to her feeling good about the experience. She said it was the officer’s attitude, “He was so willing to help. I asked him, ‘Please don’t leave me alone in the dark’ ...I’m sure if he’d had an emergency call, he would have left.” Another woman replied, “Actually, I don’t think they’re supposed to leave.” She told the story of getting a flat about ten years ago. “They stopped behind us while my husband was changing the tire—we didn’t call them. He turned his lights on to make other drivers aware there was someone stopped here. He said, ‘I can’t help you at all, but I have to sit here if you’re parked on the side of the road.’ Also, I’ve heard that if you have a cell phone they want you to call 911, because they want to put someone there.” The first woman said, “That amazes me because I moved here from Los Angeles. There, you get a police officer if there’s been an injury.”

A man said he had a flat tire in 1994 near the Dells at midnight. He changed his own tire, and when a trooper came, he turned on his flood light, which actually blinded the driver more than it helped. The trooper didn’t use his flashers or “red-and-whites” until the driver was ready to pull out into traffic. “He never rolled down the window; he never said a word.”

The moderator asked the participants to think of past experiences with troopers or other police officers, and to describe what made a traffic stop as good as it could be, given that no one wants to be stopped for a violation.

“Be understanding, give you a chance to explain... I had only been on the road for two blocks and hadn’t seen a speed limit sign. It didn’t matter to him... I live in Neenah and that was in Sun Prairie, so that means they take your license and keep it until you pay the fine, which was inconvenient... I wasn’t rude, I was apologetic in explaining it to him, but he didn’t care... Another time my husband was pulled over for speeding on a residential street while we were in the process of having an argument. Instead of giving us a ticket, he said, ‘Maybe you could change drivers? Is one of you a little less upset? Or, sit here and finish this discussion before you continue driving?’”

“They’re always very pleasant, whether they give you a ticket or not. For the most part, they’re very professional and courteous. You respect them for that.”

“I was in a pickup truck that had bigger-size tires on it than it should have, which I didn’t know. I said, ‘I was only doing about 60,’ and he said, ‘Really you were doing over 70.’ I said, ‘I had my cruise control set on 60.’ He was very understanding. He said, ‘I believe you, for the simple reason that when you saw me, you didn’t hit your brakes.’ He let me go because of that, just gave me a warning.”

The moderator asked for words describing what they want to see from an officer, whether in a violation stop or when giving help. They listed communication, respect, and courtesy. They agreed that most police officers do show these attributes.

One said the only time he had a bad experience was when a city police officer tried to lecture him. “I know that already. I don’t need a lecture, just tell me what I did,” he

complained. A woman replied, “But they don’t know you know that. Some people don’t.” The man answered, “But it’s not their job to lecture me and make me feel bad.” He described his experience, and she described hers; both had failed to completely stop at a stop sign and felt they had acted reasonably given the traffic conditions. She said she’d like officers to “give more warnings” in borderline situations, and the man agreed that officers should consider the context of the infraction.

### **Property Affected by Road Construction**

When asked at the beginning of the focus group about the most recent experience with DOT, a few participants described their experience with proposed highway expansion.

“I own Greenville Liquidators, up there on Highway 15... [near] what used to be old Highway 76. Next year, they’re going to put a four-lane road in there. The first time they called these meetings to get everybody’s input, all the neighbors that are affected by this, so we all go to this meeting at the town hall in Greenville, and we all got our input put in there. They had several different meetings, this was the first time, and the second time we finally got results. They were going to put four lanes, two going each way and a raised curb in there, which would make us all go backwards forwards and every which way to get anywhere. Finally, they agreed to put a turning lane in there, which they were not very happy with, but everybody insisted. There was I betcha 150 townspeople at that meeting. They were all adamant... Just by my corner there, at Greenwood and Highway 15, it’s a bad corner for people to get out. There’s a lot of traffic going through there, and they agreed to put a set of lights in there. They said the speed limit should be 45 mph going through there. We said, “That’s easy, just post a sign saying 35, and it will be a 45 mph zone!” *[group laughter]* “So anyway, after they agreed to all this stuff, you see little articles in the paper that they’re dropping all this stuff. I think we lost the stoplights; we also lost the 35 mph speed limit. I don’t know about the turning lane, whether that’s going to be shot down too.”

“That’s my same experience with Highway 441. In the beginning, they were going to take our [farm] buildings because the nature trail would be on our side of the road, then they switched the nature trail to the other side of the road. Now, we are left with the highway within less than 100 feet from our buildings. They won’t take our buildings. They went diagonally through the farm, and we have a lot of pie shaped small fields left, which no farmer can turn their equipment around in. If we try to develop what land we have left behind our buildings, there is no access where we could have a road put into the development. We were paid well—they took 12.8 acres, and we were paid well for that—but there’s a lot of damage to our property, and it’s so close to our home.”

“I have 40 acres in Fremont that they landlocked. My 40 acres abuts my sister’s. The highway went through my sister’s land. They paid her well for the 6 acres they took, but they landlocked me, so I have to buy a helicopter or something to get in there. I have zero access, none. They said, ‘The damage to your 40 acres is \$6,000.’ Ha! I talked to them, and they upped it by a little bit more than double that but still. My land is gone, virtually, because I can’t get to it.”

Another participant reacted in surprise, “They can’t do that, can they?” Several others replied together, “Yes, they can, they did it, they can do whatever they want.” The surprised one pressed on, “I thought by law they had to give you access.” Others shook their heads and said that was not the case.

When the moderator returned to this topic later in the discussion, the woman with the farm said it had been a bad experience. “They [construction crews] go 20 hours a day. They stop for four, and while they’re stopped, the maintenance and fuel trucks come in. I sleep real well until midnight, and then I’m awakened constantly. I know it has to go on because they have a time element, but it’s awfully hard when it’s right beside your home.” She said her first information about the construction was when she was contacted by the Green Bay DOT office. She described that experience.

“In 1999, they started in with the maps and the directions of what they planned to do. At that time, our [entire property] would have been taken because there was going to be a nature trail on our side of the road. But there was a lot of disruption in the community, and they switched the trail. Some of it had to do with going over the railroad track... That left us directly next to the highway... less than 100 feet from our dwelling. The overpass is right by our driveway... They paid us well for the land they took, but they left us with pie shaped fields we can’t rent out, and no way to put in roads if we wanted to develop the other land, unless we put the driveway right through our house. If we wanted to sell the property, we’d have to sell at a loss, because it’s not a place anyone would want to live or farm.”

She explained how the negotiations for the property went.

“In 1999, with the original plan, they would have taken the entire property. One of the men [at the first meeting] said, ‘If this was my dwelling, I’d surely move.’ Then when we went to the DOT office to talk to them, I said, ‘This is terribly hard. I was born on this farm, born and raised; my parents bought the land in 1921.’ He said, ‘We often find that when we’re taking a farm dwelling that’s been in the family many years. We’ll try to compensate you for your loss’.”

The business owner retold his complaint that DOT had made promises in response to community input but then recanted on at least two of the three promises. He said, “If they don’t put that turn lane in front of my business, I’ll be dead.” He was angry, “Why did they have these meetings if they weren’t going to do what they promised?”

The moderator asked what could make the experience more positive, but mostly the participants complained rather than offering suggestions.

“They stick to their plan no matter what.”

“They take the best farmland. They avoid the lowlands, because somehow or other they can’t or aren’t allowed to put the roads there.”

“How can they do that, if it’s your right to have your property, if you don’t want to sell it, that they still can do that?”

The moderator pressed the participants to describe what would make the experience better. They agreed that receiving fair payment for their land was very important. The one whose land had been landlocked by a new road had been able to negotiate for a higher payment. But even though the amount was doubled, he still didn’t feel it was fair. The farm owner wished the road could have been curved to be a little farther from her house. She said DOT had refused to put in a sound barrier because not enough people were affected.

Another participant said it was important for DOT not only to compensate for the land it takes, but also to consider “what happens to the land they don’t take” and compensate people for the lost value, because they can’t use it the way they might have.

Someone asked the landlocked man if DOT had offered to buy out his entire property. He said yes, but he was unwilling to sell because the land had been in his family since 1850. “They made me an offer, but I felt it was way below market value.” He seemed to mean market value before the road went through.

A foreign-born participant said the government should not be allowed to condemn property. Another participant agreed, “That reminds me of communism! In the United States, they cannot do that!” Later, another person claimed the right to own property was guaranteed in the Constitution.

A man who had lived in New York said there, the state is obliged to provide access to any property cut off by state road construction.

A participant said extra value should be placed on the property when it has been in a family for a certain number of years: “Doesn’t that mean something to them?” Another replied, “You expect them to have feelings?”

The participants’ outrage over the treatment of the property owners continued to pop up in comments throughout the rest of the focus group.

They all endorsed the recommendation, “Don’t be a bully.” They said this meant considering people’s rights, being responsive to community input, and having feelings for the “common” people. Some agreed with a woman who said “the Governor or the President” wouldn’t be treated this way, and the DOT was “prejudiced” against the common people, whom it considered “nobodies.”

The moderator asked them to rank the importance of not being a bully, understanding the value of property, and planning roads with respect for the land. They agreed that these ideas were closely linked and hard to prioritize. Eight said understanding was the most important, and three said not being a bully was the most important.

### **Driving Affected by Road Construction**

All had encountered construction while driving on state roads. Someone made the obligatory joke about having two seasons. The moderator asked what made them mad.

“Sometimes, there are two ways you could go, and they are both under construction. Is that necessary? Couldn’t they do one at a time?”

“Road construction should be done one road at a time. Highway 29 is a perfect example. They’ve been working on that road for years and years. They do one piece here and another piece there. Nothing gets *done*.”

All agreed that once the construction is complete, they feel DOT did a good job.

“Picture Highway 10 over the last five years. It’s an enormous change, and the way it’s been handled up to now has been very good. You see the progress every time you go down it; you can see they’re getting there... They have a lane they’re working

on, and it's rerouted, and you're down to one lane, but it's well marked and the construction spot [works its way] down the highway."

All agreed that was a good description of a good project.

Another added that it was important for there to be clear signs showing alternate routes or detours. He is a convenience store manager and often gives directions to many semi-truck drivers trying to find a nearby truck stop. Construction has closed both exit ramps, he said, and "the problem is, by the time they find out that they can't get off on N, they've already passed it... There's no signage ahead of time" telling them where to exit and what alternate route to take. He said this problem is statewide, and noted that truckers have different needs than car drivers. Another participant asked, "Is it the responsibility of the state to tell truckers how to get to the truck stop?" He replied, "It's the responsibility of the DOT to identify an alternate truck route when an exit is closed." All agreed that closed exits should be announced before the previous exit.

The moderator asked whether the participants research road conditions before setting out on a long trip. Most do not; two call AAA. One said the local paper publishes a map of construction projects around the state every year before every major holiday. The former trucker said DOT has a toll free phone number that drivers can call to find out about summer construction and winter weather conditions, and it also publishes an annual road construction map, which he posts in his convenience store.

The man concerned about construction near his business asked if there was a DOT Web site he could consult about future construction in a certain area. This generated a lot of excited chatter.

### **Communication with DOT**

Half the group said they use the Internet to communicate and to gather information. Some would make a phone call to get information from DOT, and few if any would consider an in-person visit the best way to gather information.

One said, "I'd rather do it on-line, because I know what I'm looking for. On the phone, you have to wait to make a choice and press the button." Others shared her frustration with phone message options.

The moderator asked the group to rate DOT's overall communication with them, using a 10-point scale, with 10 meaning excellent communication. Five gave a rating of 8 or 9, three gave a rating of 7, and two gave a rating of 5. Two people gave ratings of 2 or 3; both were unhappy with road construction through their property or near their business. Some explained their ratings:

"8. My only contact has been through the mail for renewals, and that's been fine."

"7. I don't like *what* they've communicated, but they've done it well."

"3. Because they didn't listen to what the community wanted."

"2. They communicate well, but it's a one-way street."

### **Advice to DOT**

After discussing all these aspects of DOT's function, one participant said she still felt the most important job was road safety.

A woman suggested, "We've all gone through driver training... Is there anything to teach you what to do if your car breaks down on a four-lane highway? How do you get off the road? What should you do if you don't have a cell phone?" Another woman agreed, "They should have an emergency guide to follow."

The worried business owner said the highest priority for DOT should be road construction. "If you go to the DMV, they might tick you off, but half an hour later, it's off your mind. The other is affecting you for life. They don't even worry about what it's doing to people's lives." The woman who said road safety was most important said, "If they do a good job of road planning, that makes everything safer. It keeps the landowners and the drivers happier." She mentioned a bridge in Menasha that needs repair and expansion, and she said more foresight would have made it a better bridge.

The group animatedly discussed how the planning process should work, talking over each other and gesturing. They seemed to believe that community members should be involved at an earlier stage. Some felt DOT usually presented a plan that it had no intention of changing.

The moderator asked them how Wisconsin compared to other states for road construction. The participants said roadwork is a necessary annoyance everywhere, and Wisconsin's is no worse than anywhere else. Some felt Wisconsin's roads were a little better than elsewhere. A few said firmly that traffic enforcement was much better in Wisconsin than elsewhere. An ex-trucker didn't agree; he said Wisconsin's State Patrol didn't have much of a presence: "You can just about terrorize this state in a semi, and you won't see a trooper."

An immigrant, who had been a cab driver in New York, said, "Speaking of road safety, it's beyond me how someone can get a license who cannot speak or write English." He spoke English before he immigrated in 1952 but found the New York licensing test very difficult. Here in Wisconsin, he said, anybody can get a license, even if they can't read the signs.

When asked how DOT should track citizen satisfaction with its work, the participants suggested questionnaires and focus groups. Some said DOT should be proactive and get people involved before it takes action, instead of waiting until afterwards to find out if people liked it.

None had ever tried to find out if DOT spends tax dollars on things that matter to them. None knew how to go about finding out, but assumed it was available somewhere. When asked, they said they'd like that information to be better publicized, but their tone seemed to suggest a lack of real concern. One suggested, "Include it in your license plate renewal."

A participant mentioned a bit of highway that had recently been extended and wondered why. They discussed whether and how they could know whether a given project was being done by the state or city. One said she assumed the state did all work on state highways and only on state highways. Another said a city would be "beneath the DOT and go along with the DOT, or get approval for anything."